

# Organics in Product Water from Mechanical Thermal Expression

**Ying Qi and Alan Chaffee**  
School of Chemistry, Monash University  
CRC for Clean Power from Lignite



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Faith still had one arm locked around **Professor Snape's** neck. ... They placed their hands on the shoe though, **dirt**, gum, and hair be damned. ...

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"**Dirt**. I know." she smiled. "I often accused Elrond of trying to pull one ... Stop chewing on **Professor Snape's** stool." The wolf took one long look at the ...

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**Professor Severus Snape** reflects back on his past, both the hate and the painful ... Severus **Snape** sat, staring out of the **dirt** streaked window of his cold ...

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... Morgan felt blood there. This was all she needed: to be conked out on a forsaken **dirt** road. ... "Of course, **Professor Snape**, it's just a little cut. ...

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Your **Professor Snape** knew this." Madam Pomfrey's jaw fell open as she suddenly ... **Snape** looked down at the **dirt** before continuing. "I found her, Harry. ...

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**Professor Snape** {er}. ... **Snape** and Sarah are sitting at the kitchen table, twiddling their thumbs and whistling nonchalantly. When you're stuck in a house ...

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**Colin E. Snape**. 1. , Will Meredith. 1. and Gordon D. Love ... **colin.snape**@nottingham.ac.uk. 2. Department of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences, ...

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[Scientists make step forward in drug detection - News Archive ...](#)

The research, being led by Professor **Colin Snape** in the University's School ... even the new designer **steroid** specifically manufactured to avoid detection ...

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## City leads field in drug testing

A new detection system to test athletes for performance-enhancing drugs is being developed.

Scientists at the University of Nottingham believe their research will provide a more reliable way of detecting drug molecules in the body.

The technique they are studying is normally used to aid oil exploration by splitting small fragments of organic matter from petroleum rock.

Scientists think the system could allow them to pinpoint banned substances.

The modified technique can recognise the origin of any carbon-based molecules, including fatty acids and steroids, in the body.

Previous testing techniques have been unable to offer a precise detection method.

Professor Colin Snape, based at the university, said: "In effect, you are what you eat plus a little bit of what you might inject.

"In their natural form, however, the body's molecules are too 'sticky' for accurate measurements by our laboratory

-----

“ In effect, you are what you eat plus a little bit of what you might inject

”

Professor Colin Snape

drug

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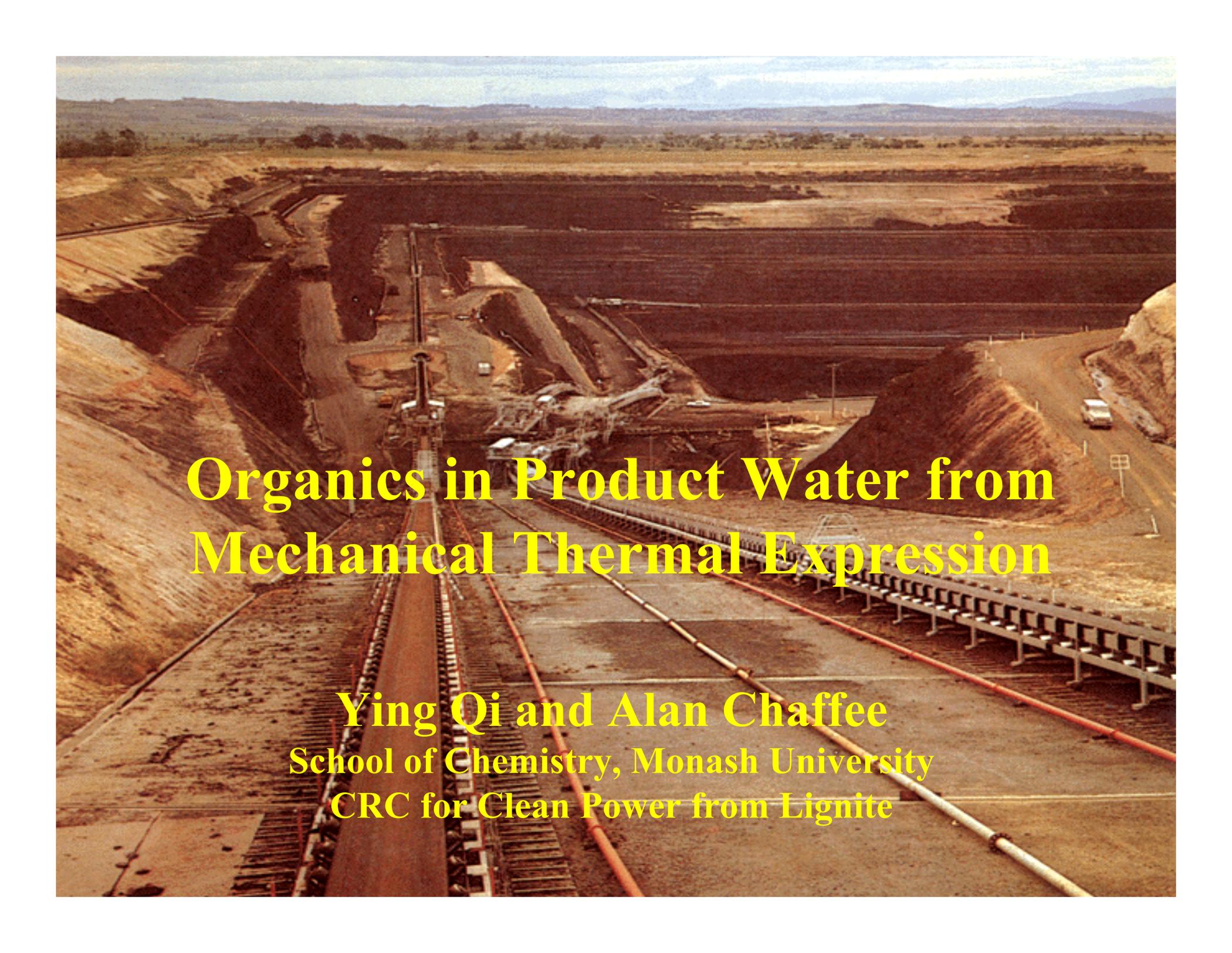
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# Organics in Product Water from Mechanical Thermal Expression

Ying Qi and Alan Chaffee  
School of Chemistry, Monash University  
CRC for Clean Power from Lignite

# WATER PROBLEM IN BROWN COAL

DRY BASIS

WET BASIS

Water 150 g

Coal 100 g



Water 60%

Coal 40%

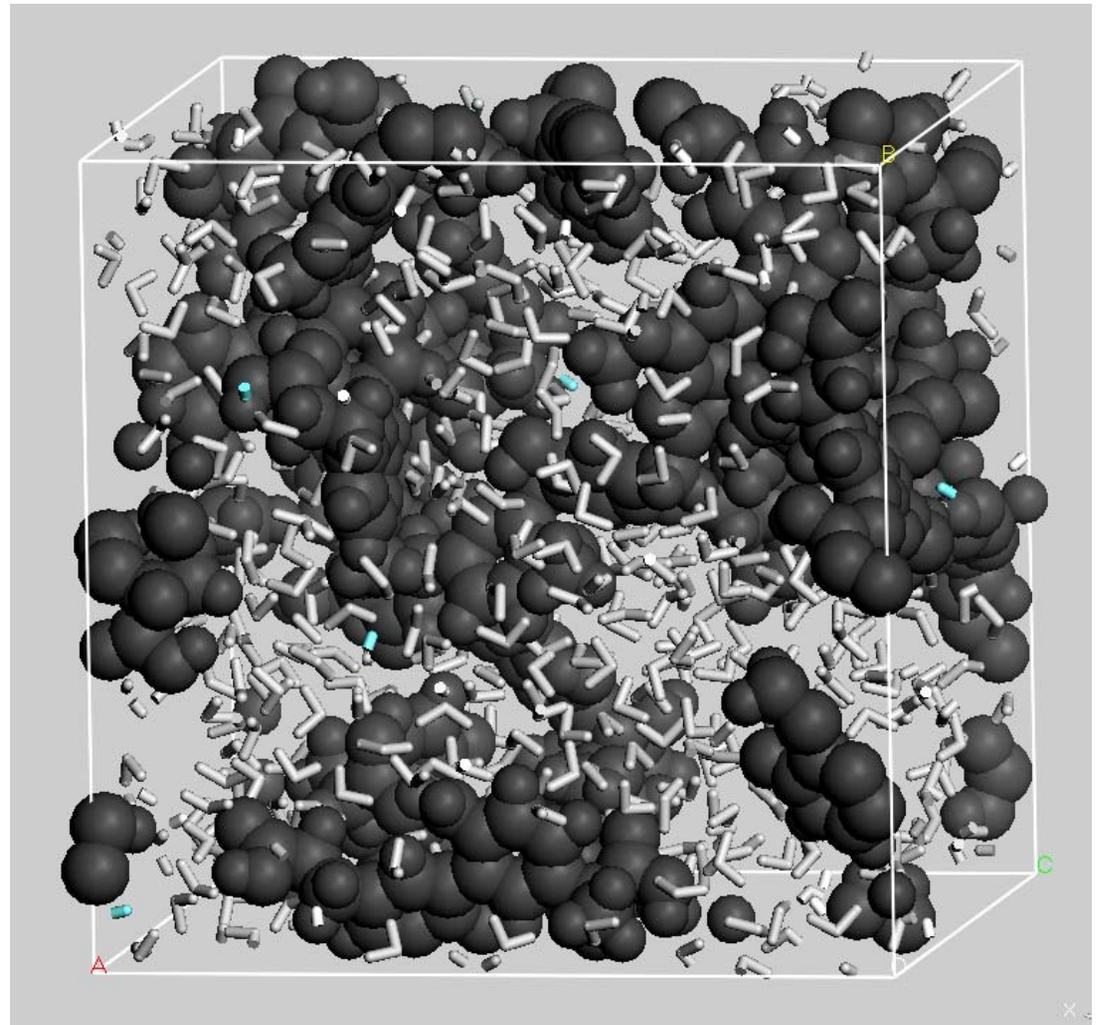
More  
Water  
than  
Coal

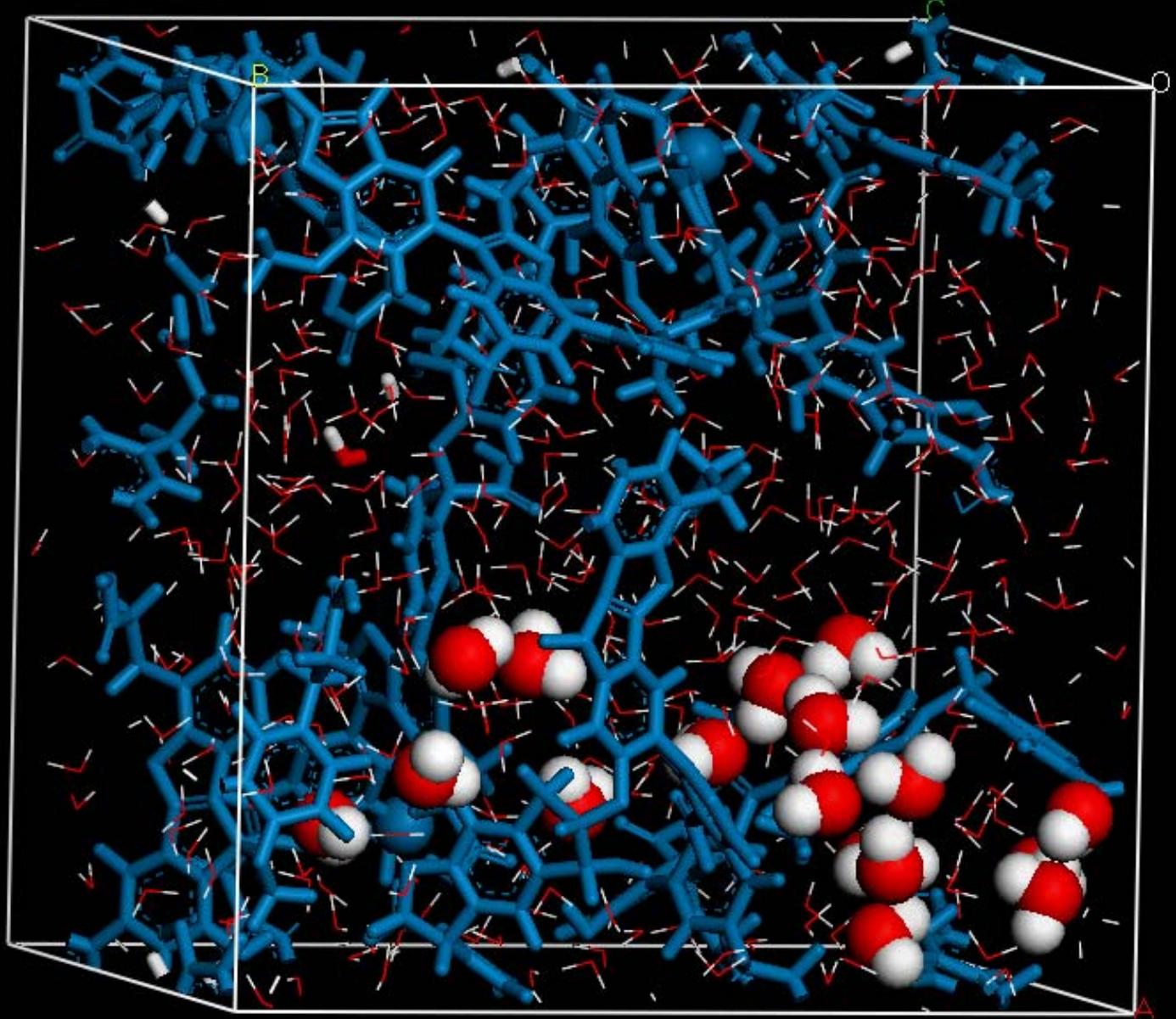




# Lignite-Water Interactions

3-D molecular model of fossil wood (*Podocarpus sp*) from Loy Yang OC. The simulation box is  $(2.73 \text{ nm})^3$ .

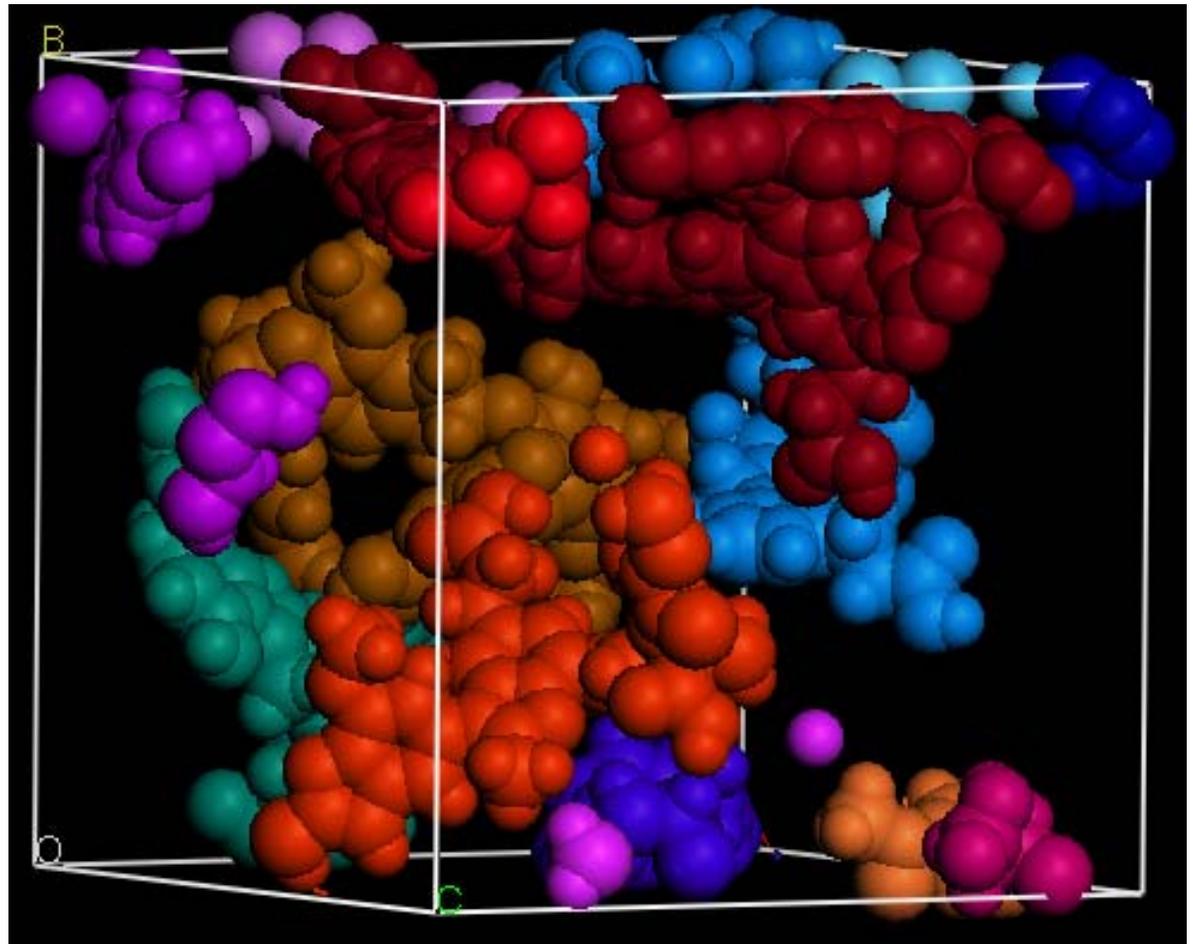




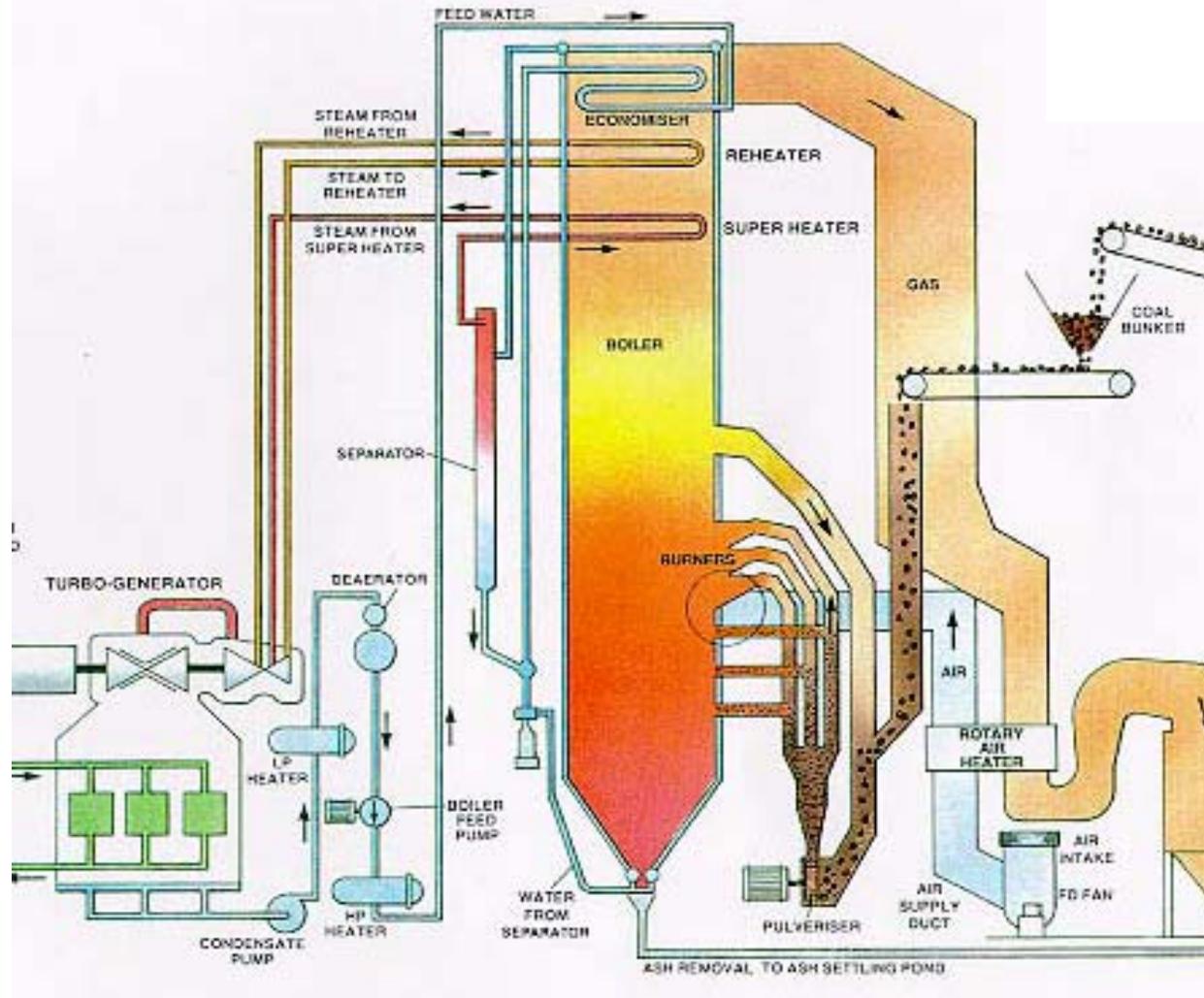
# Lignite-Water Interactions

Water removed  
to illustrate  
pore volume

Porosity:  
45.4%



# Current Practice



Water is removed by evaporation

**VERY INEFFICIENT**



# Non-Evaporative Drying Processes

Include:

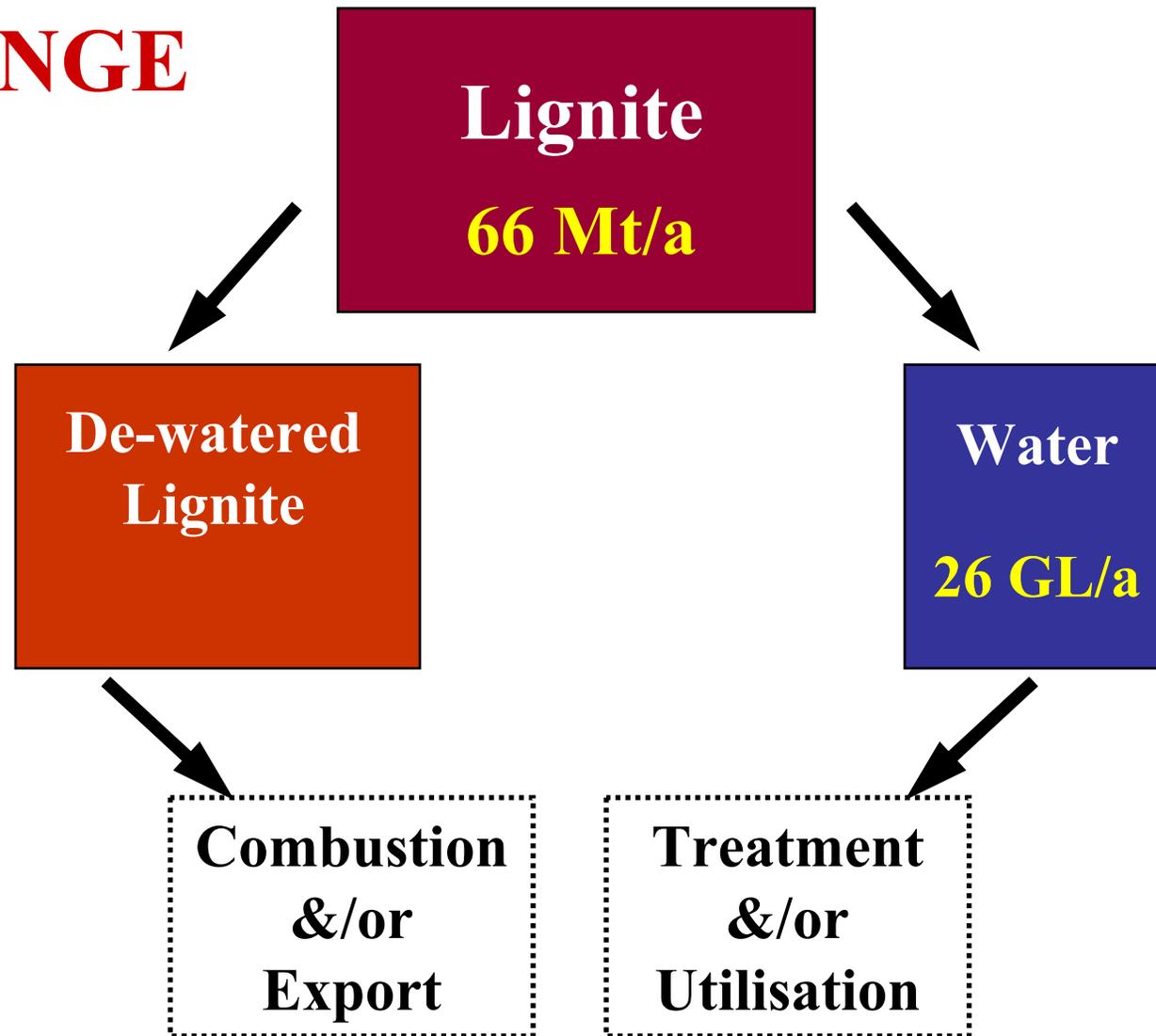
- Mechanical Thermal Expression (MTE)
- Hydrothermal Dewatering (HTD)
- Pressurised Steam Drying

Water is removed as a liquid rather than steam

Heat of evaporation is saved -  
leading to more efficient electricity production



# THE CHALLENGE



# Possible Applications

## **Industrial**

Power Station: Condensate water  
Power Station: Cooling water  
Power Station: Fire and ash water  
Paper plant

## **Environmental Recharge**

Surface waters: lowlands, uplands, lakes, marine  
LV industrial area  
Groundwater

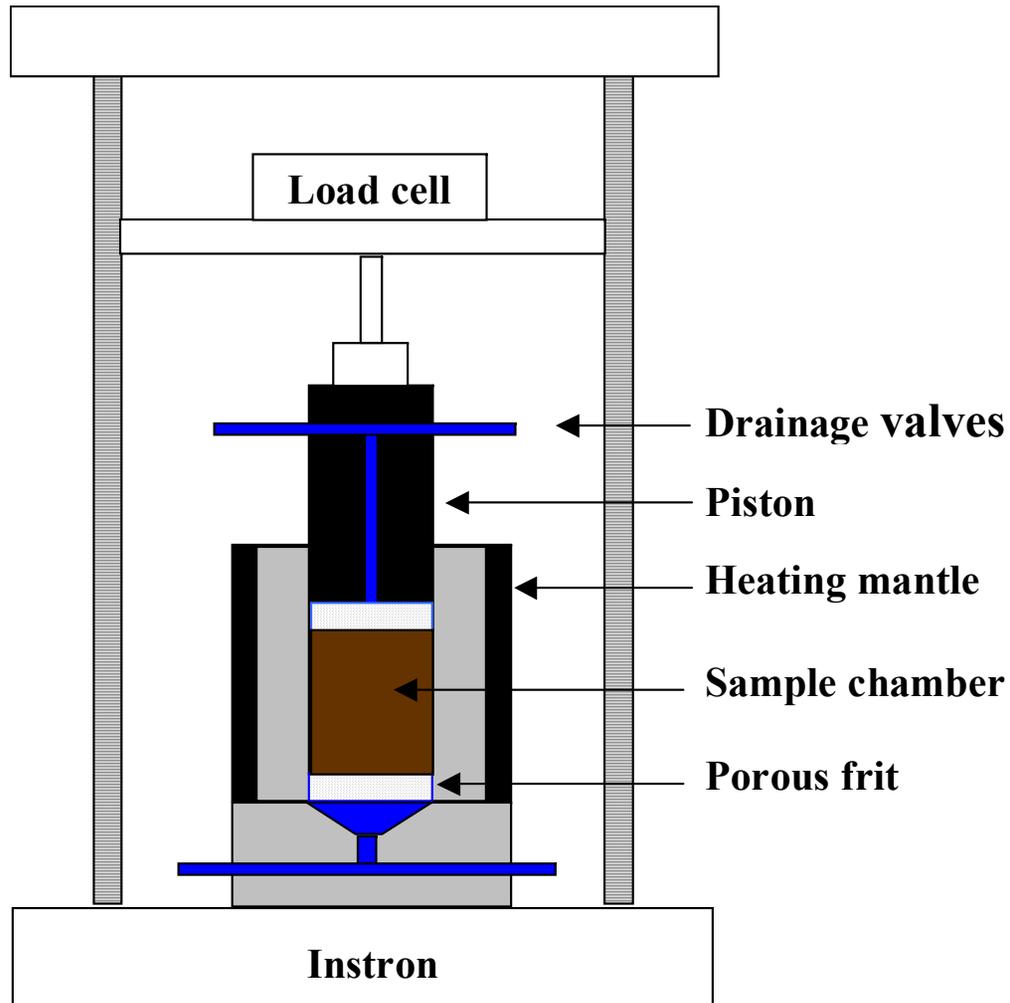
## **Primary Industries**

Irrigation  
Livestock  
Aquaculture

## **Recreation**



# MTE Processing



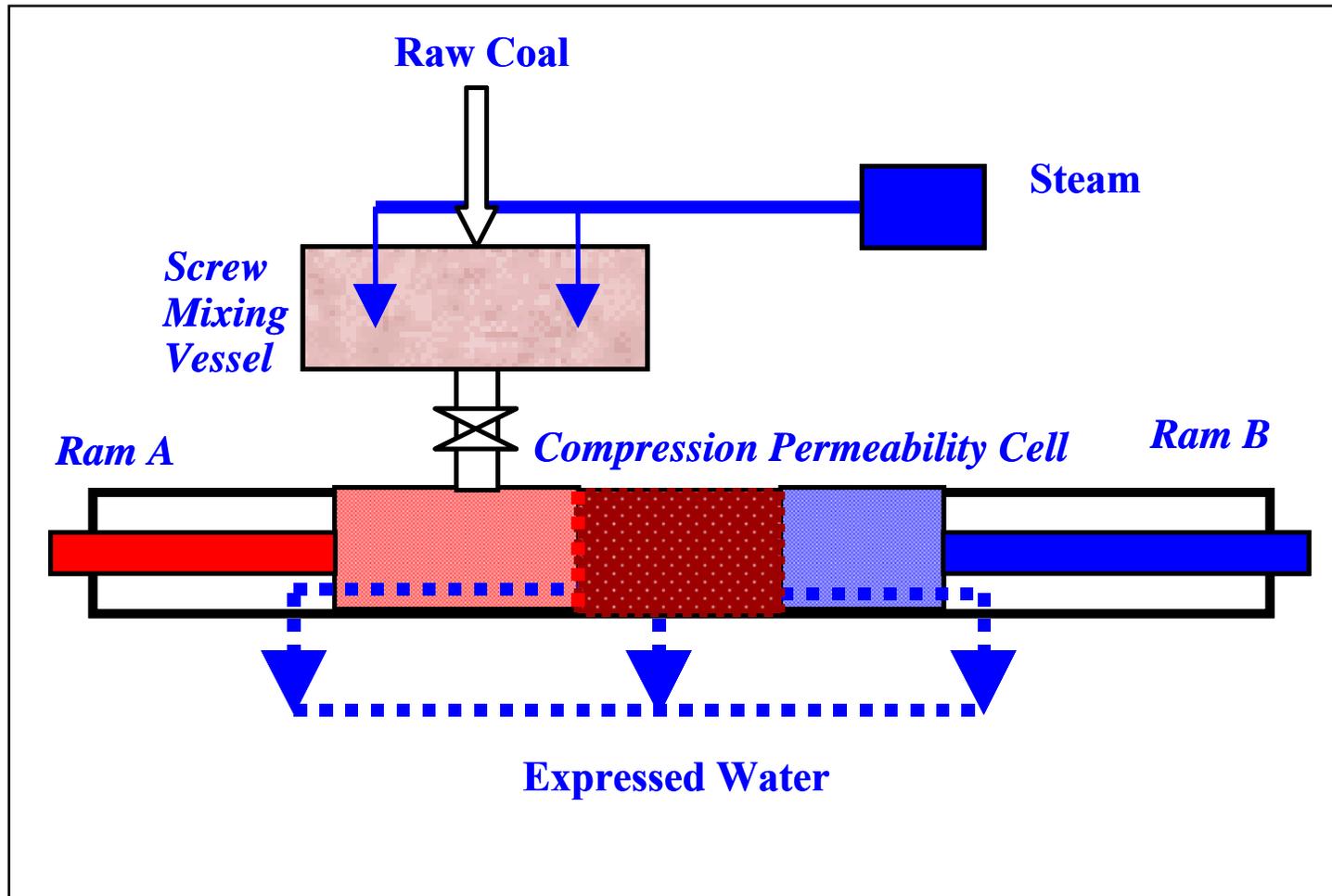
**100g coal (wb)**

**T=180-250 °C**

**$P_{\text{mech}} = 0-25 \text{ MPa}$**

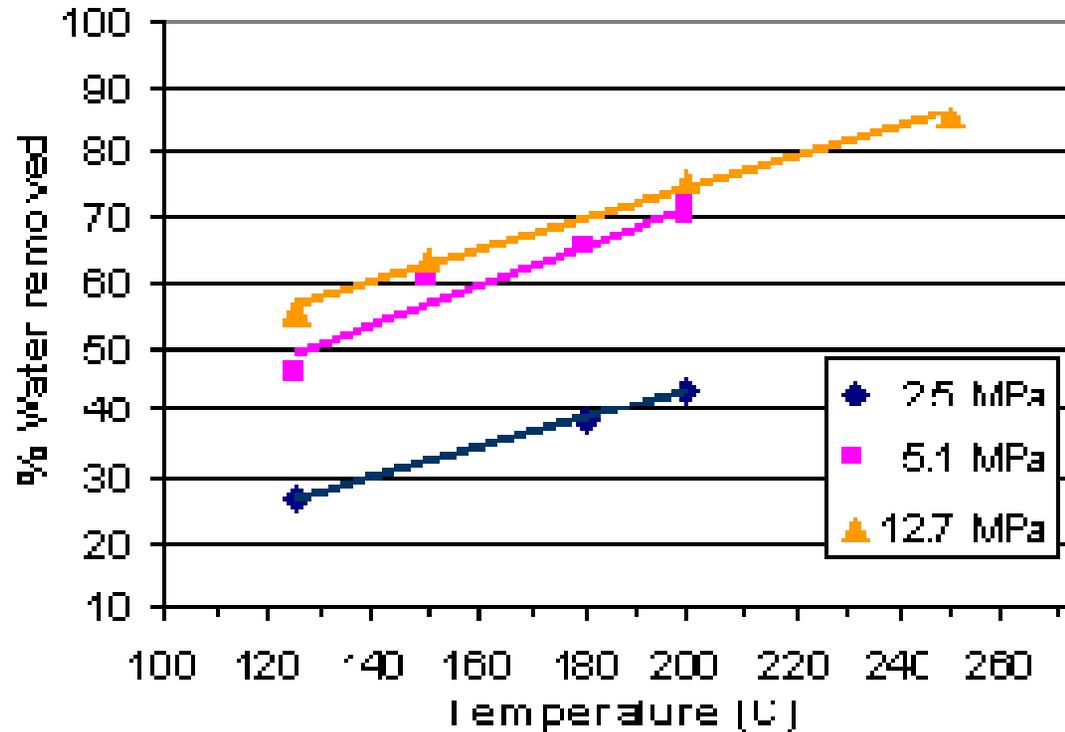


# Schematic of MTE Pilot Plant



# MTE Dewatering

## Effect of Process Conditions



Harsher conditions (T, P) lead to greater water removal  
Pressure becomes less significant as it increases



# Comparison of Dewatering Methods

## Organic Carbon in Product Water

	MTE	Batch HTD	HTD pilot plant	Pressurised steam dewatering
Temperature (°C)	120 – 200	250 – 350	300	182 – 222
Lignite	Loy Yang	Loy Yang	Loy Yang	Loy Yang
Total Organic Carbon (g/L)	0.08 – 0.4	0.3* – 7	1.32	NA
Organic Carbon (g/kg dry coal)	0.4 – 2.2	2* – 50*	NA	0.1* – 2.3

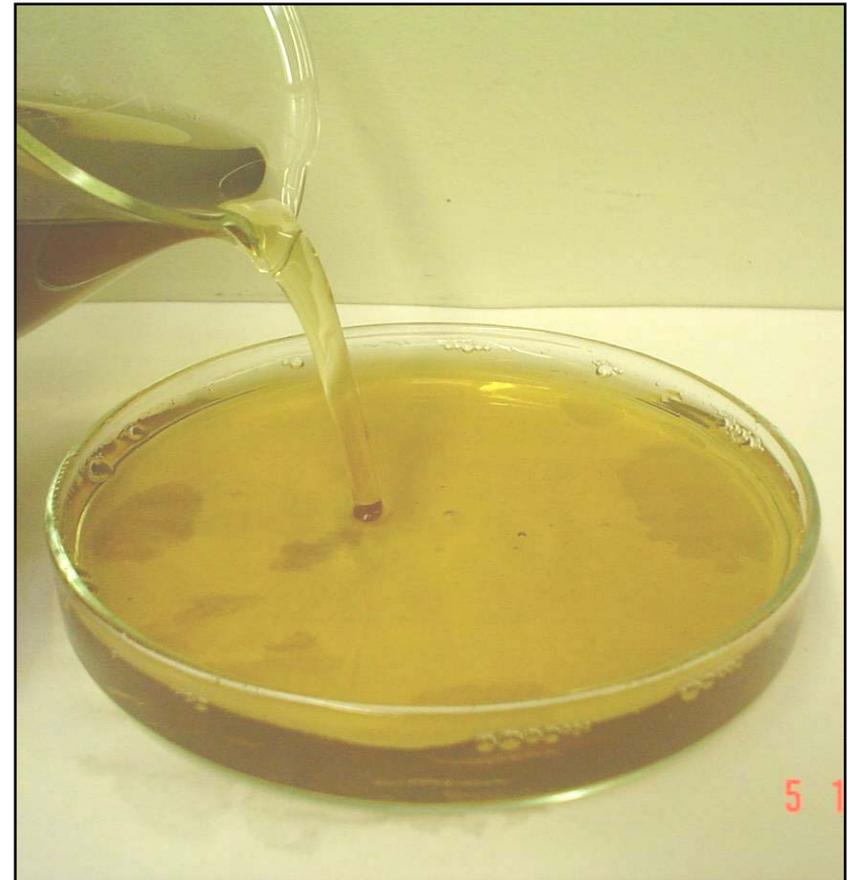
Organic Carbon in product water is predominantly determined by process temperature  
MTE releases less organics to the product water



# MTE Water Quality



**From Rig**



**After Settling**



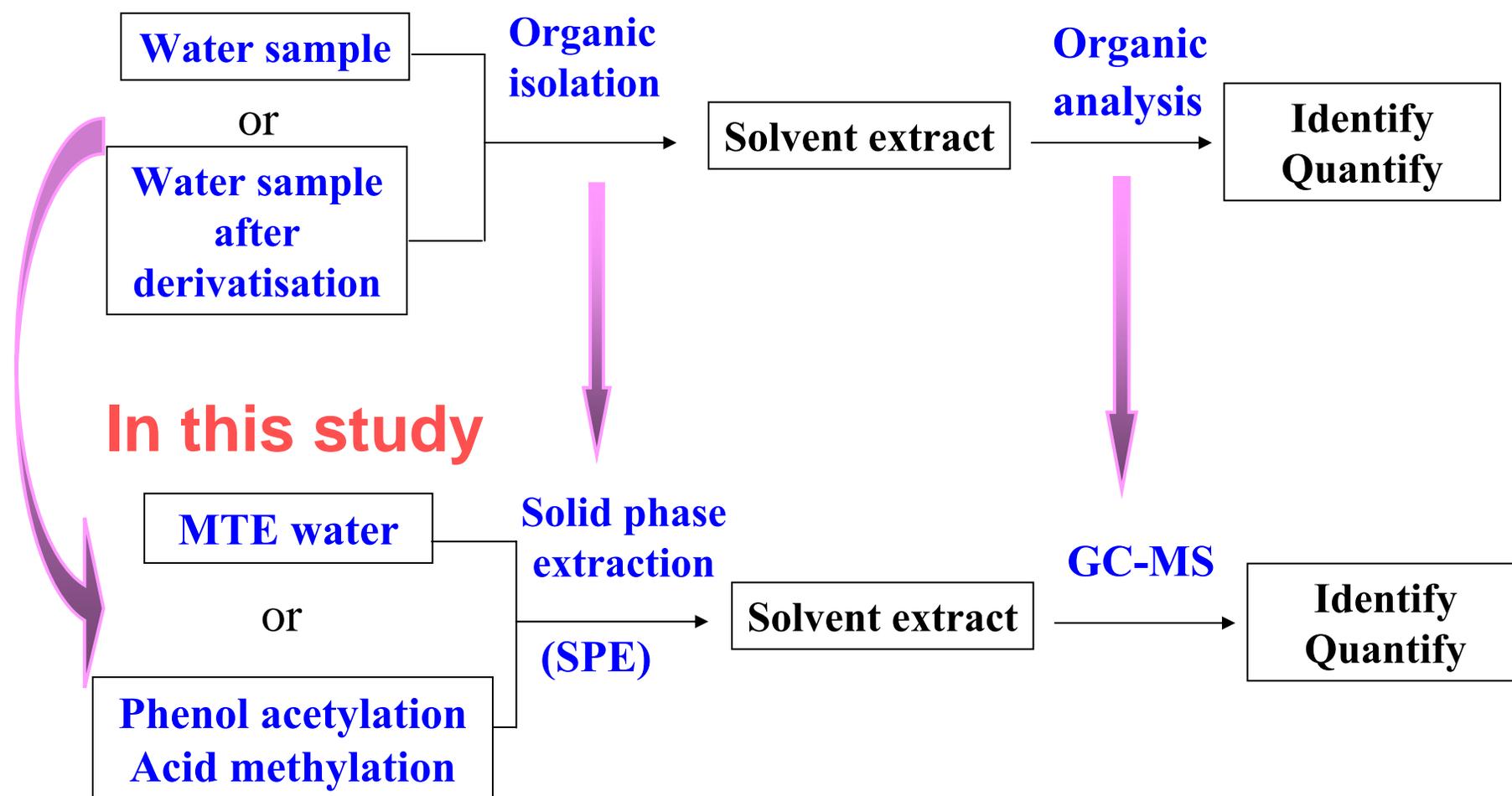
# MTE Water Quality

## Physical Properties vs Guideline Levels

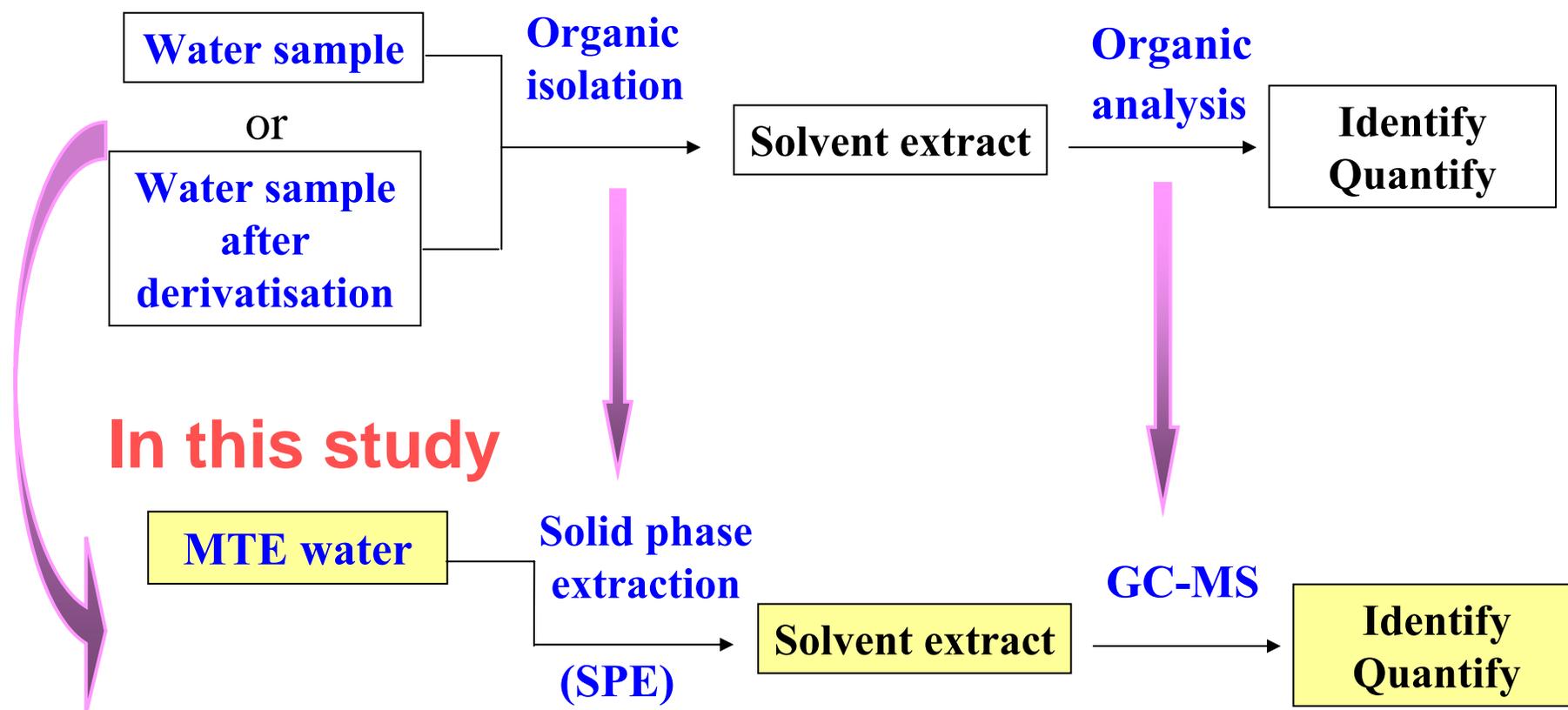
Water type	pH	Conductivity ( $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ )	Turbidity (NTU)	TDS (mg/L)	TSS (mg/L)
Loy Yang MTE water	3.46	2000	2600	2200	1700
Morwell MTE water	3.63	3890	726	5300	800
Yallourn MTE water	3.48	2080	1230	3000	920
Lowland rivers	6.5-8	125-2200	6-50	-	-
Latrobe Valley Waters	6-8.5	-	50	770	90
Cooling water make up	6.4-7.7	500	40	200	30
Agricultural irrigation	6-9	-	-	800	-
Saline Water Outfall Pipeline (SWOP)	6.5-8.5		25	25000	20
Regional Outfall Sewer	6.0-9.0				40

Physical properties do not generally meet guideline levels  
Remediation will be required.

# General analytical procedure for Organics



# General analytical procedure for Organics

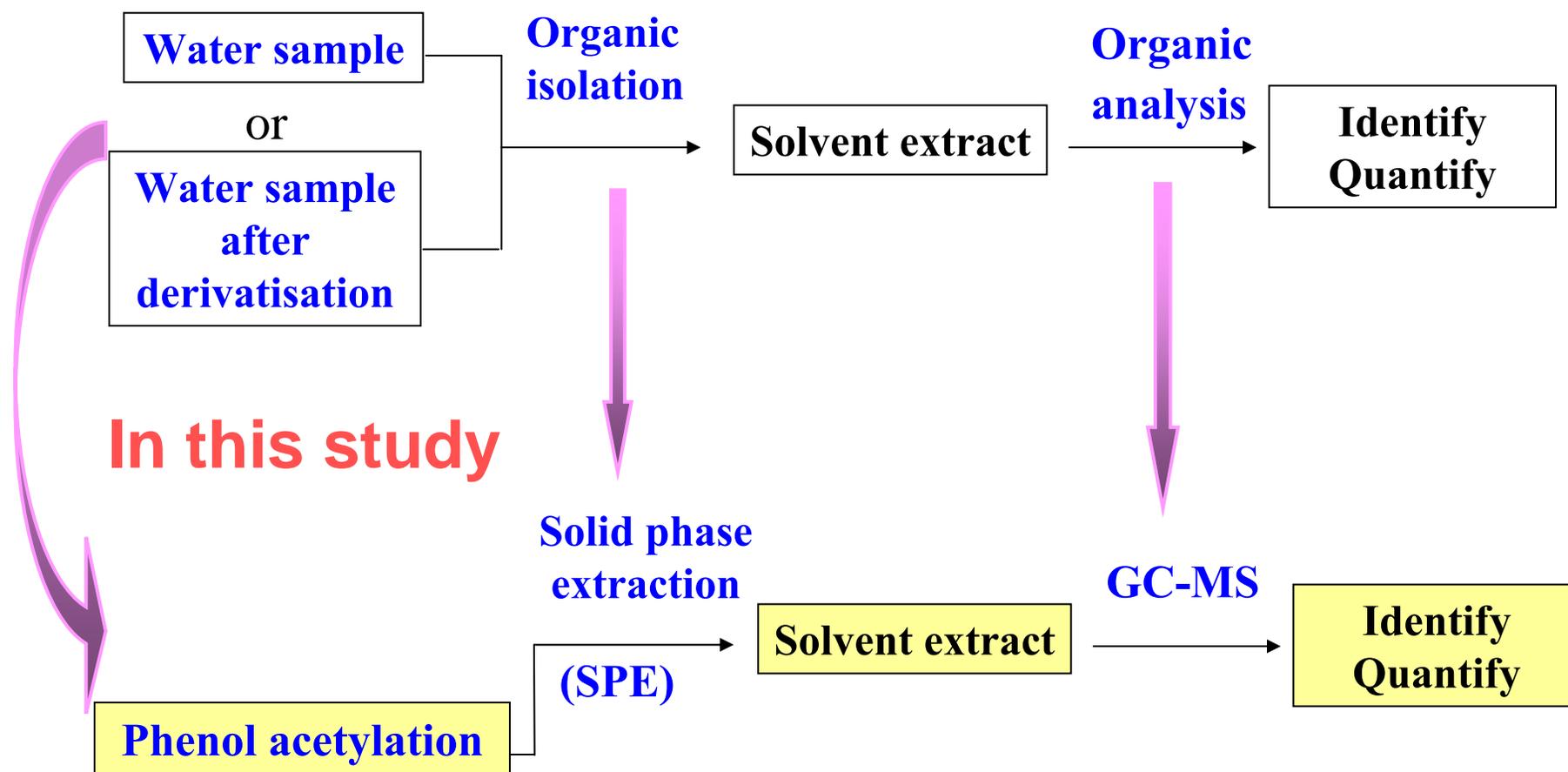


# Direct SPE-GC-MS

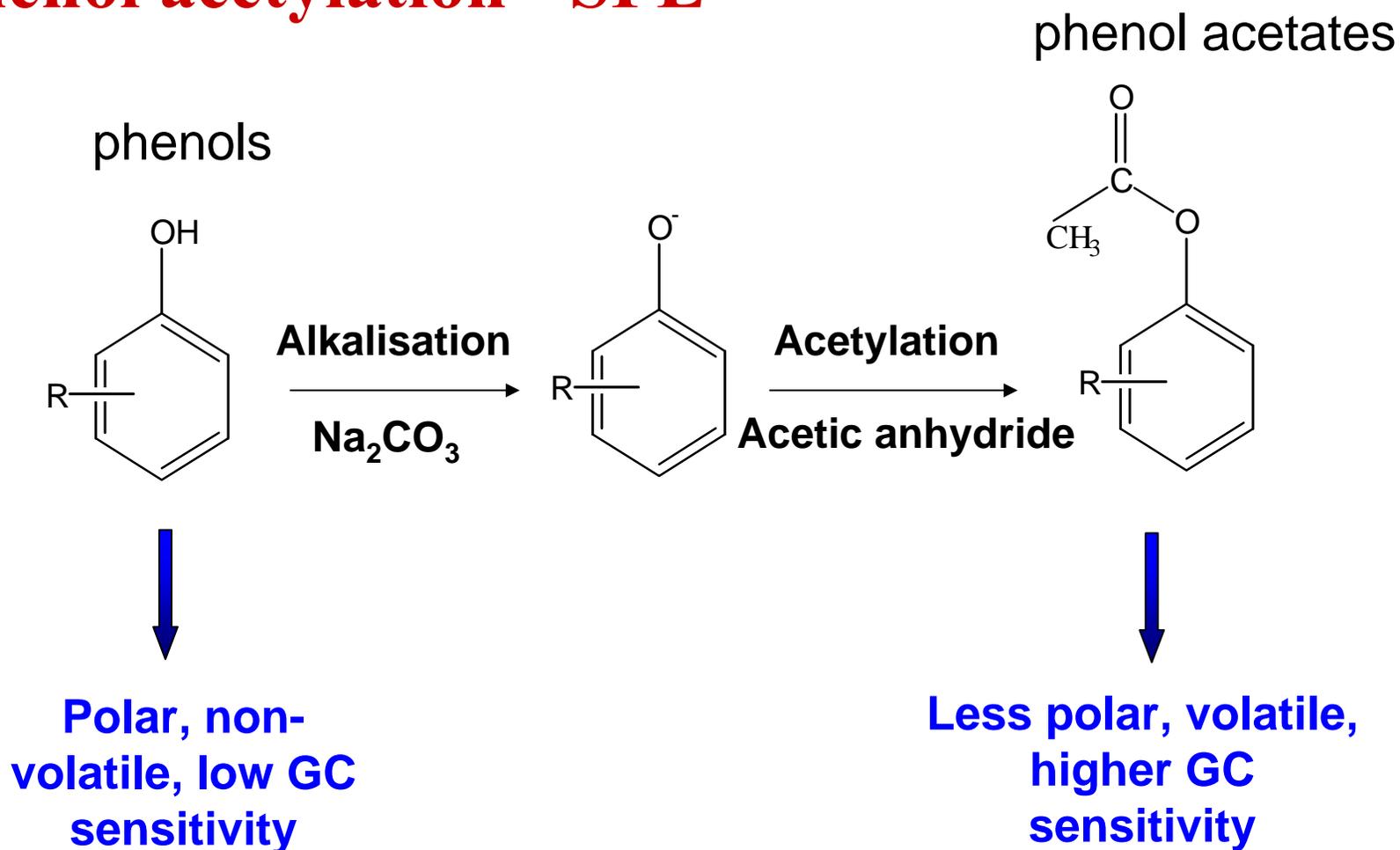
- **Method**
  - Solid phases – PPL
  - Elution solvent – ethyl acetate
- **Recoveries (ppm level)**
  - Mono-phenols – >90%
  - Di-phenols – <80%
  - Tri-phenol – undetectable at < ~45ppm
  - LMW polar carboxylic acids not detectable at < ~250 ppm
- **Conclusions**
  - Low GC sensitivity of phenols and carboxylic acids
  - High detection limits
  - Poor recoveries for di and triphenols



# General analytical procedure for Organics



# Phenol acetylation - SPE

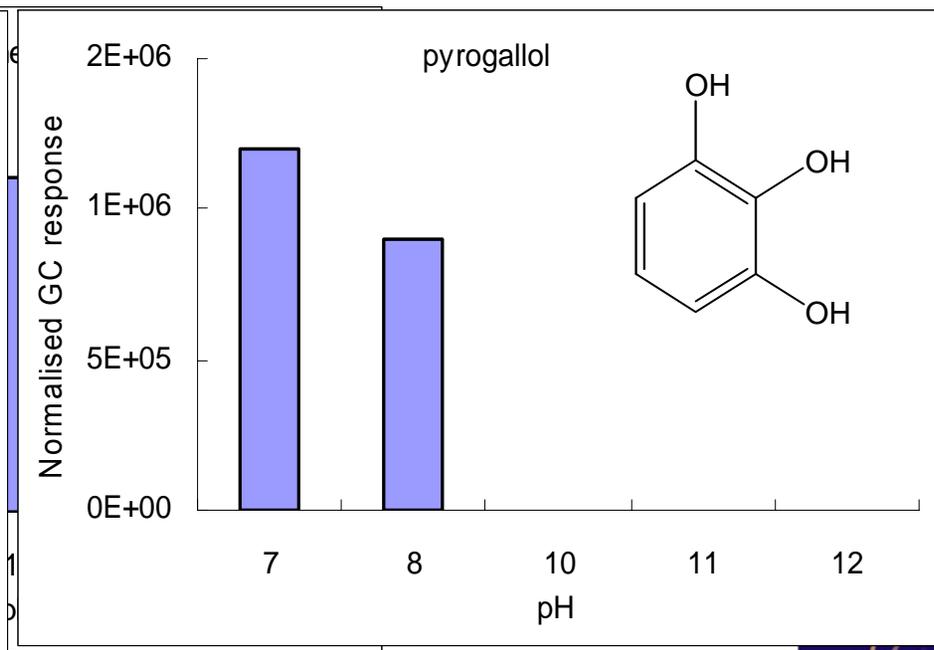
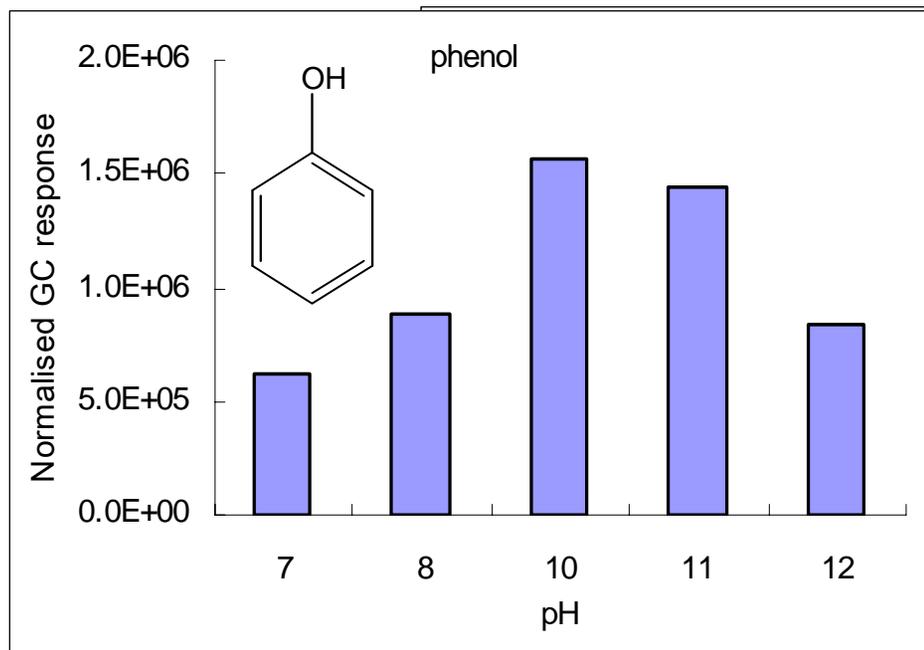


# Phenol acetylation - SPE

- Acetylation method evaluation

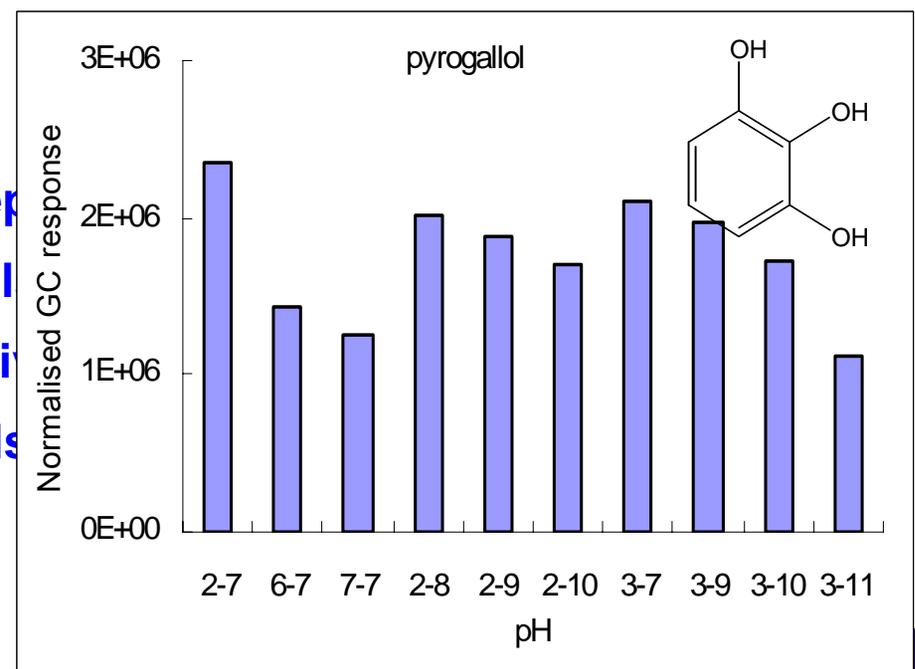
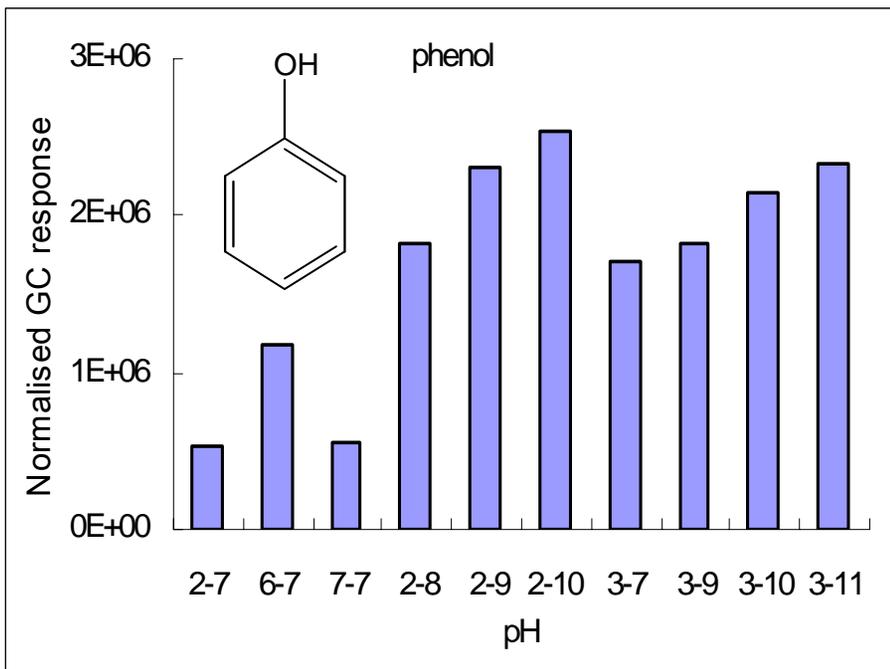
- One step acetylation – in literature

- Substituted mono phenols and diphenol – low acetylation yield at low pH
- Phenol – low yield at low pH and high pH
- Tri-hydroxy phenol – low yield at high pH



# Phenol acetylation - SPE

- Acetylation method evaluation
  - Two step acetylation – developed
    - First – low pH for tri-hydroxy phenol
    - Second – high pH for the rest of phenols (mono-, di-)



# Phenol quantification – method validation

Loy Yang  
200°C/25MPa

	Amount in MTE sample ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ )	Amount added ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ )	Total amount in spiked MTE sample ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ )	Recovery %	RSD%
Phenol	$76 \pm 1$	195	$280 \pm 16$	105	7.9
4-methyl-phenol	$3.6 \pm 0.3$	192	$208 \pm 3$	104	1.4
2,4-dimethyl-phenol	$0.9 \pm 0.0$	203	$212 \pm 2$	104	0.92
2-methoxy-phenol	$98 \pm 3$	215	$321 \pm 1$	104	0.25
2-methoxy-4-methyl-phenol	$3.5 \pm 0.1$	199	$215 \pm 0$	107	0.17
Catechol	$627 \pm 19$	211	$824 \pm 17$	93	8.7
2,6-dimethoxy-phenol	$43 \pm 1$	208	$244 \pm 16$	97	8.0
Vanillin	$118 \pm 5$	213	$345 \pm 29$	107	13
Pyrogallol	$153 \pm 4$	223	$290 \pm 13$	62	9.4



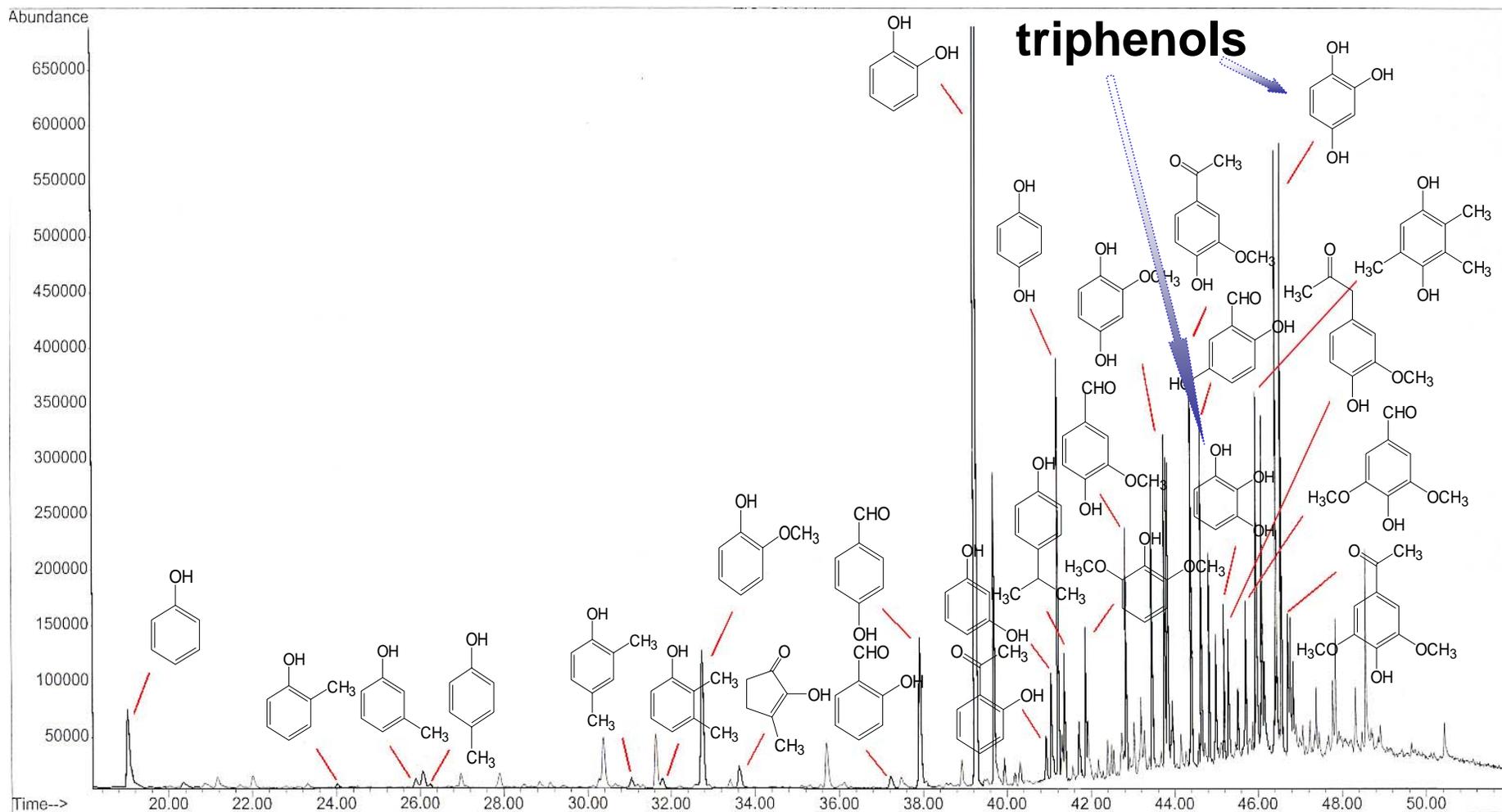
# Phenols identified in MTE water from Loy Yang coal (200°C, 25MPa)

Total organic carbon <b>0.15g/L</b>	Estimated total phenols <b>~4mg/L</b>
Phenol	1,2-dihydroxy-4-methyl benzene
4-methyl-phenol	2-methoxy-4-ethyl-phenol
2,4-dimethyl-phenol	4-[1-methyl ethyl] phenol
2-methoxy-phenol	1-[4-hydroxy-3-methoxyphenyl] ethanone
2-methoxy-4-methyl-phenol	1-[4-hydroxy-3,5-dimethylphenyl] ethanone
Catechol	1-[4-hydroxy-3-methoxyphenyl] ethanone
2,6-dimethoxy-phenol	1-[4-hydroxy-3,5-dimethylphenyl] ethanone
Vanillin	4-hydroxy-3,5-dimethoxy benzaldehyde
Pyrogallol	4-hydroxy-3-methoxy benzaldehyde
3-methoxy-4-ethoxy phenol	4-hydroxy-3-methoxy benzaldehyde
1,4-dihydroxy-2-methoxy-benzene	2,5-dihydroxy-benzaldehyde
1,4-dihydroxy-2,3,5-trimethyl benzene	3-hydroxy-4-ethoxy-benzaldehyde

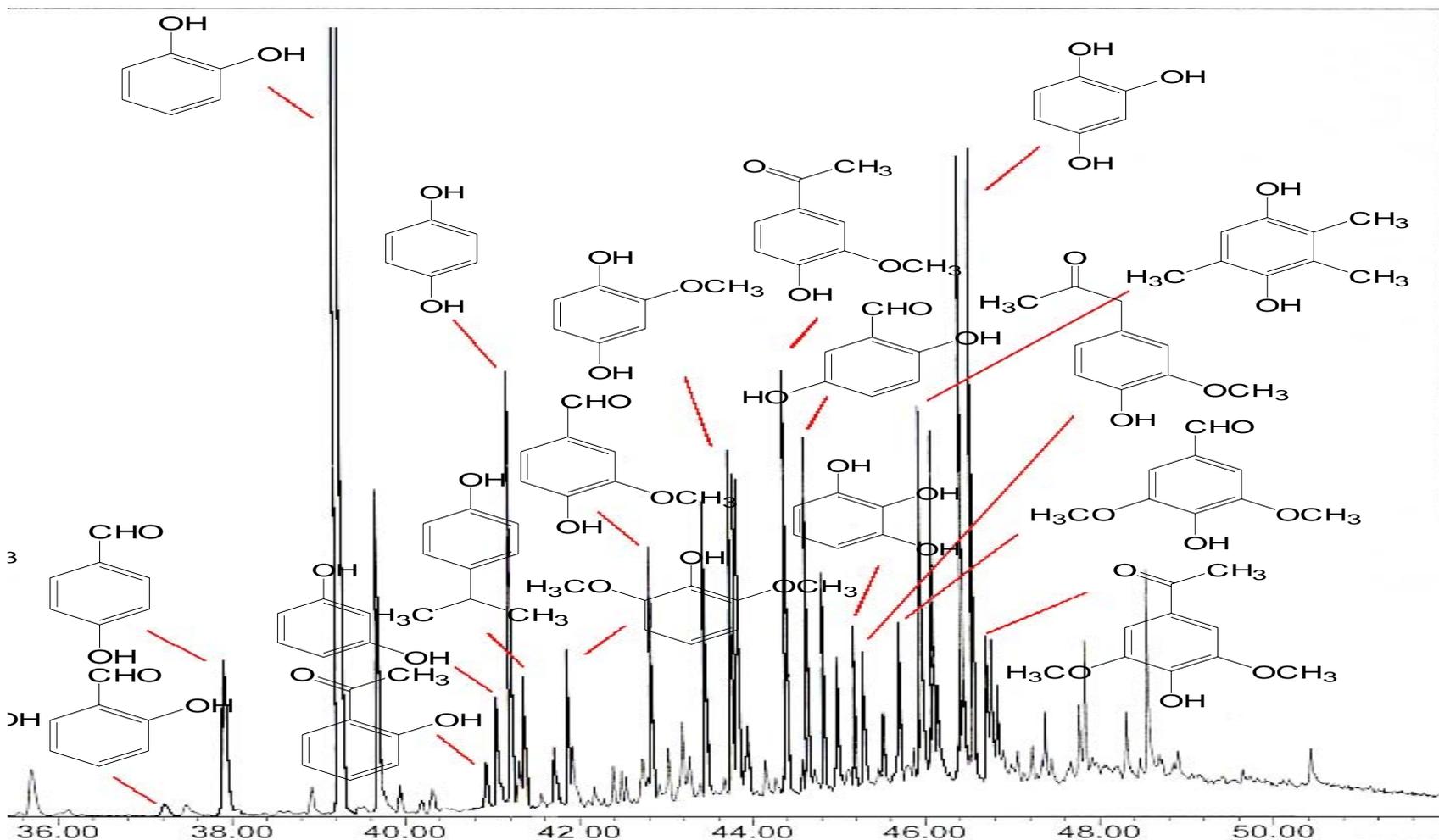
**Phenolics**  
**Carboxylic acids**  
**Others**  
**GC-MS non-detectables**



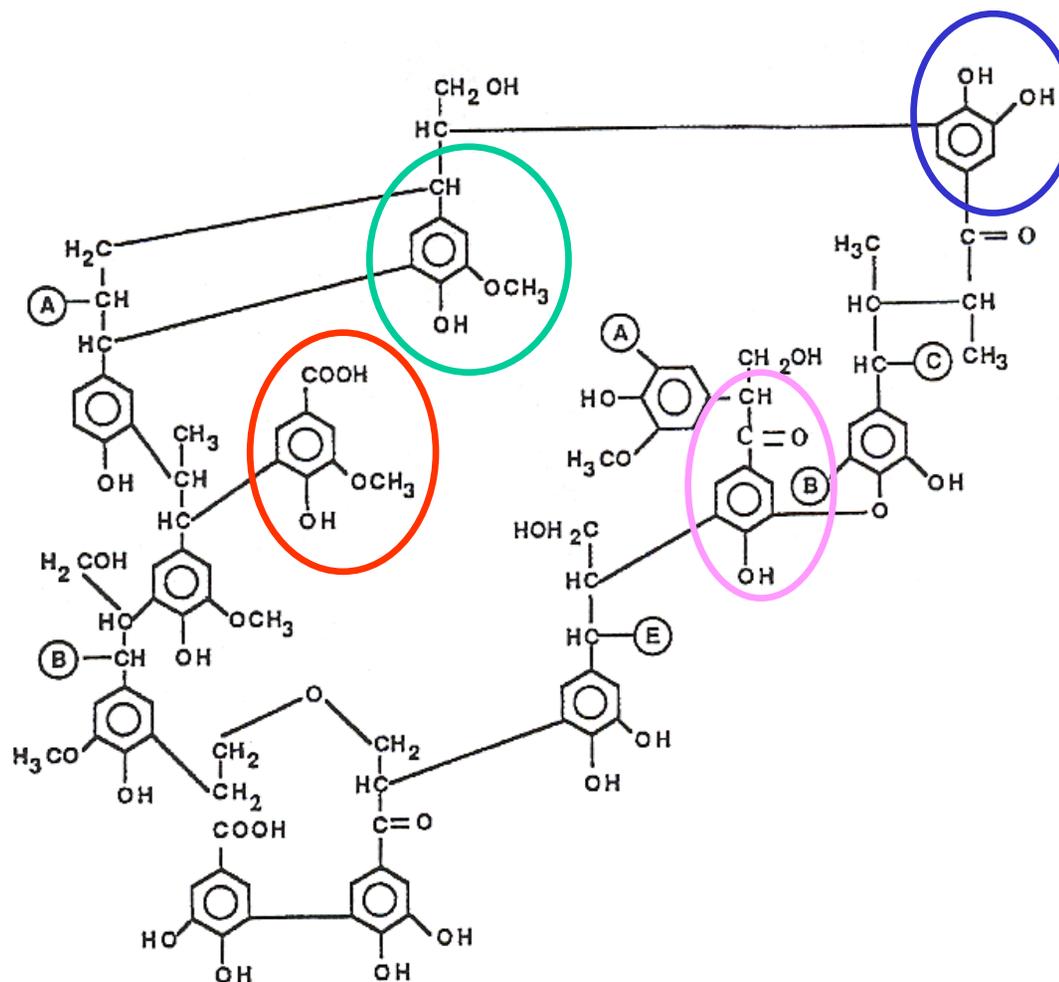
# GC-MS TIC of an acetylation-SPE extract



# GC-MS TIC of an acetylation-SPE extract



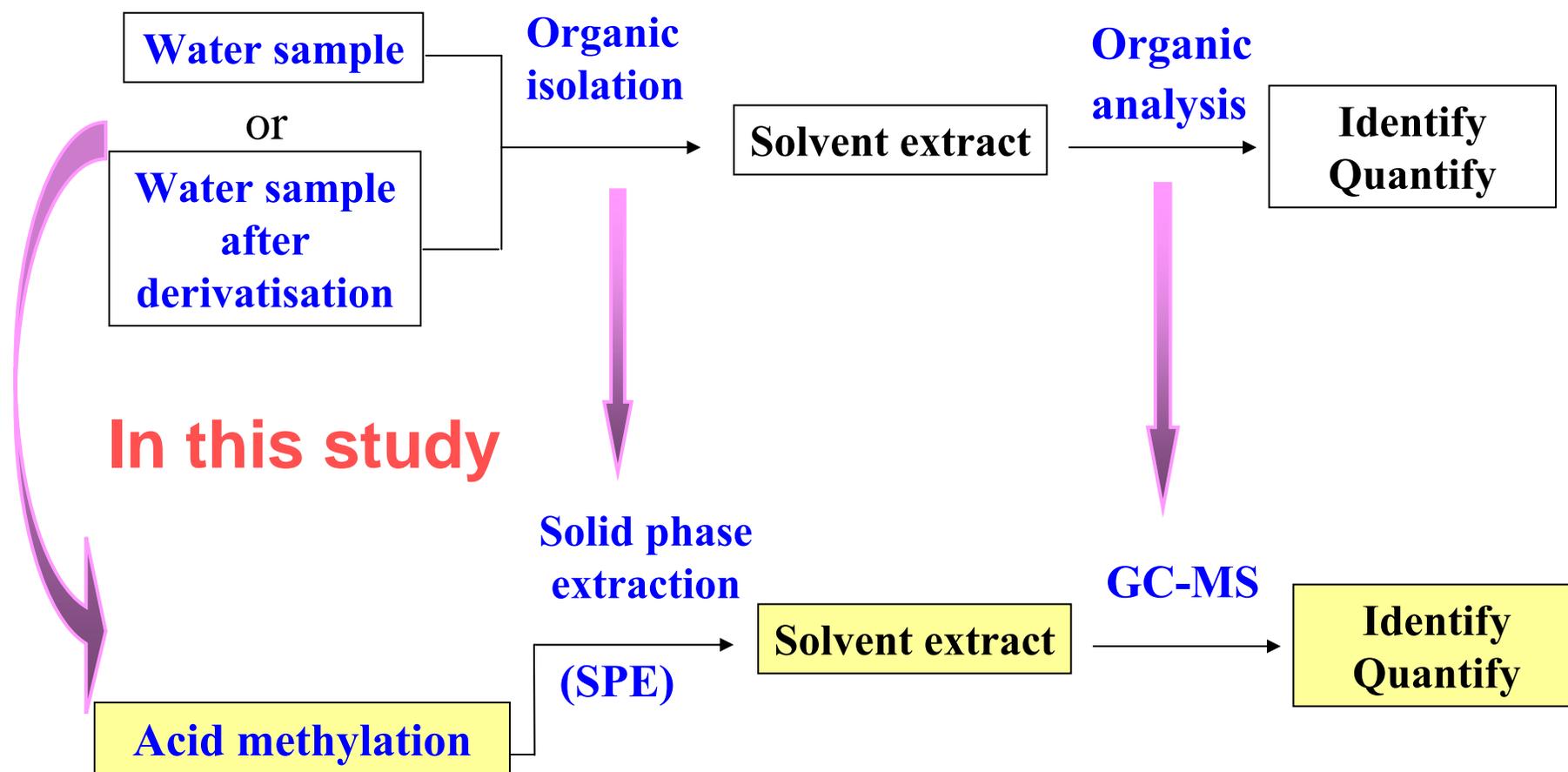
# Model of Lignitic Wood



Hatcher, *Org Geochem*, **16**, 959 (1990)



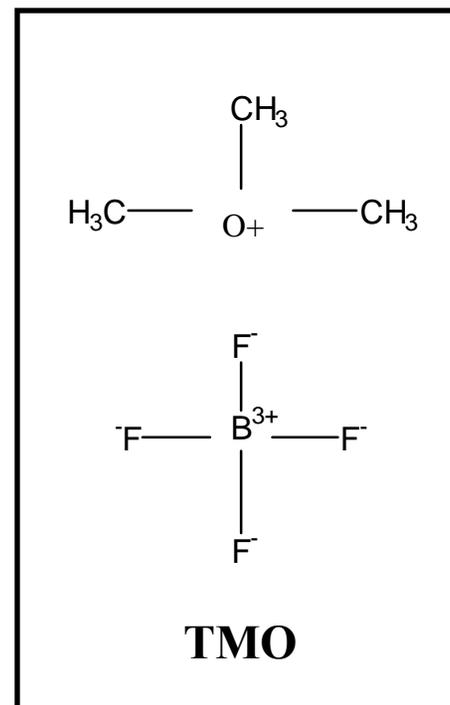
# General analytical procedure for Organics



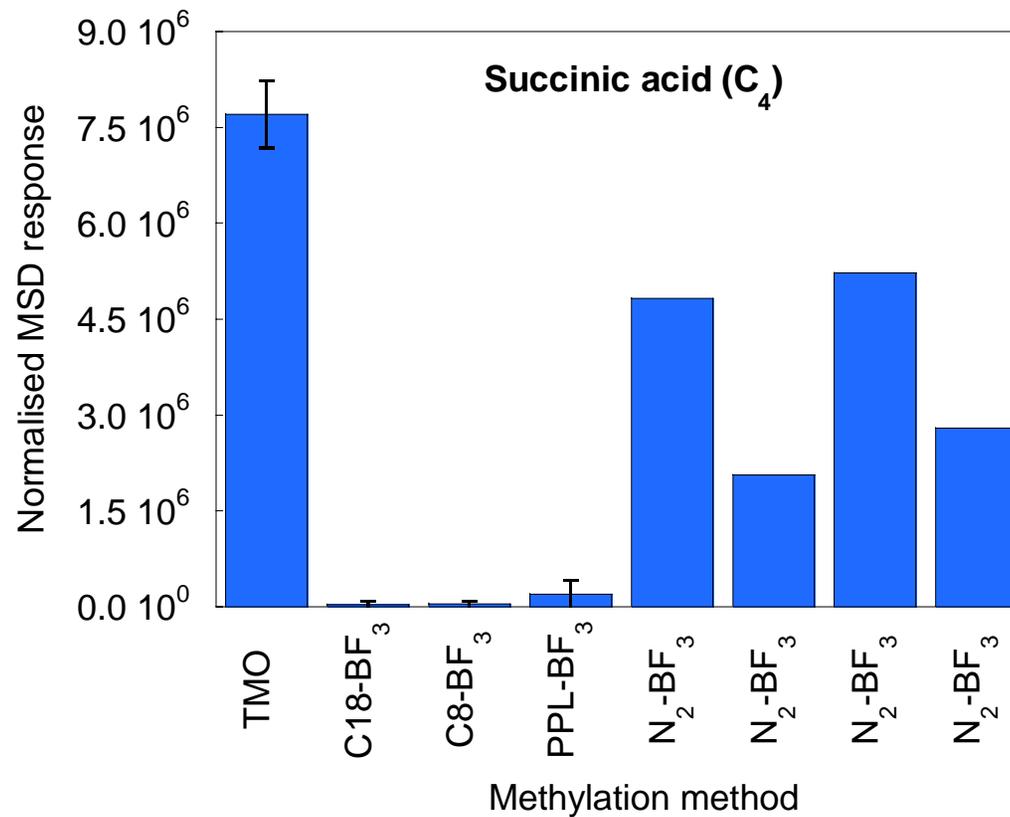
# Carboxylic acid methylation

## Common Reagents:

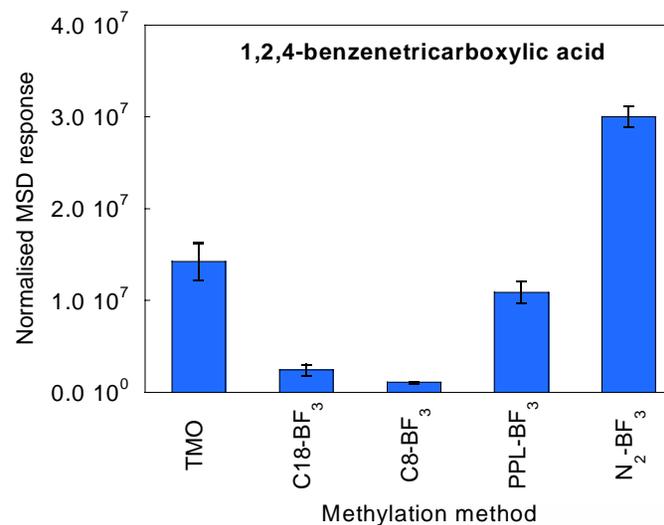
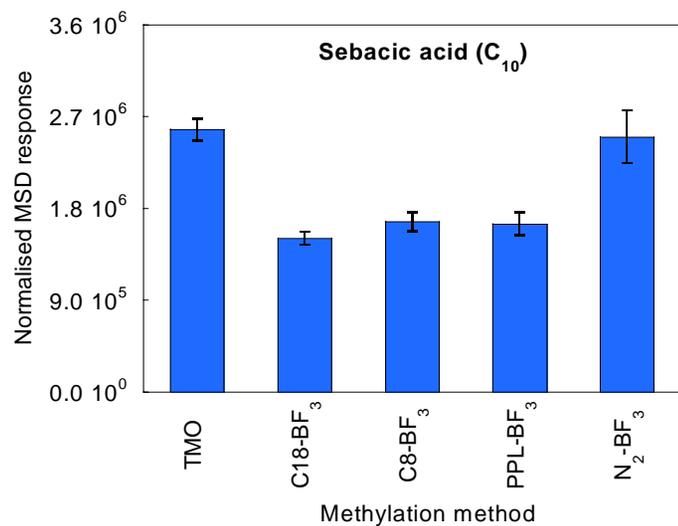
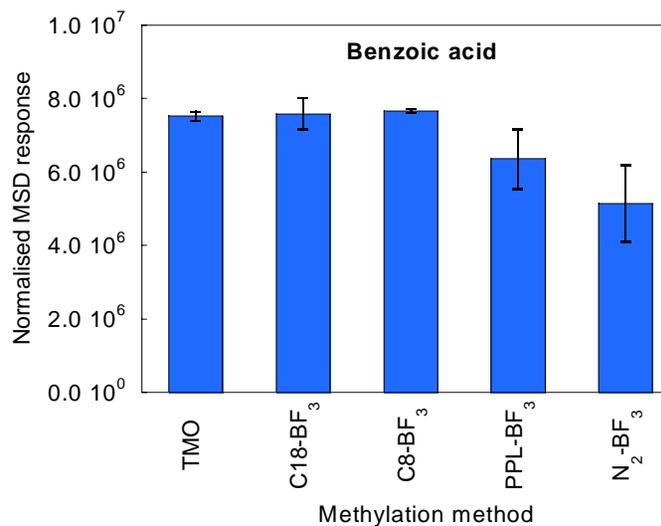
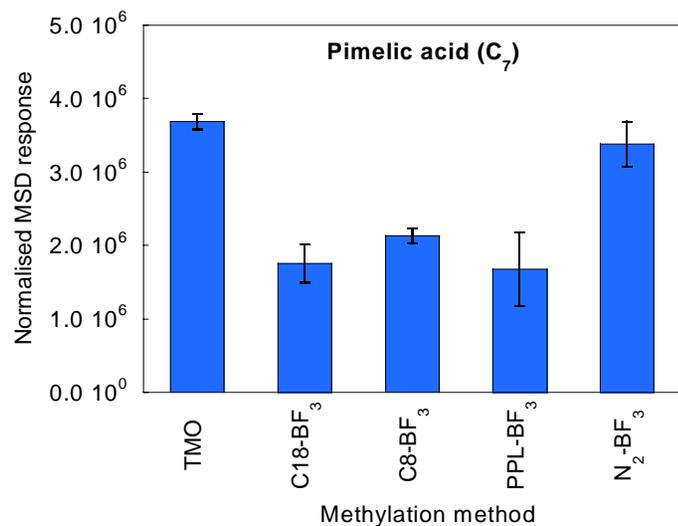
- Diazomethane
- $\text{BF}_3/\text{MeOH}$
- Acetyl chloride/  $\text{MeOH}$
- Trimethyloxonium  
tetrafluoroborate (TMO)



# Acid methylation – comparison of methods



# Acid methylation – comparison of methods



# Methylation with TMO in Aqueous Solution



**Procedure must promote reaction between TMO and acid:**

- **staged addition of TMO (5x)**
- **repeated alkalisation (NaHCO<sub>3</sub>, Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>)**
- **sealed and incubated at 100C (2 min)**



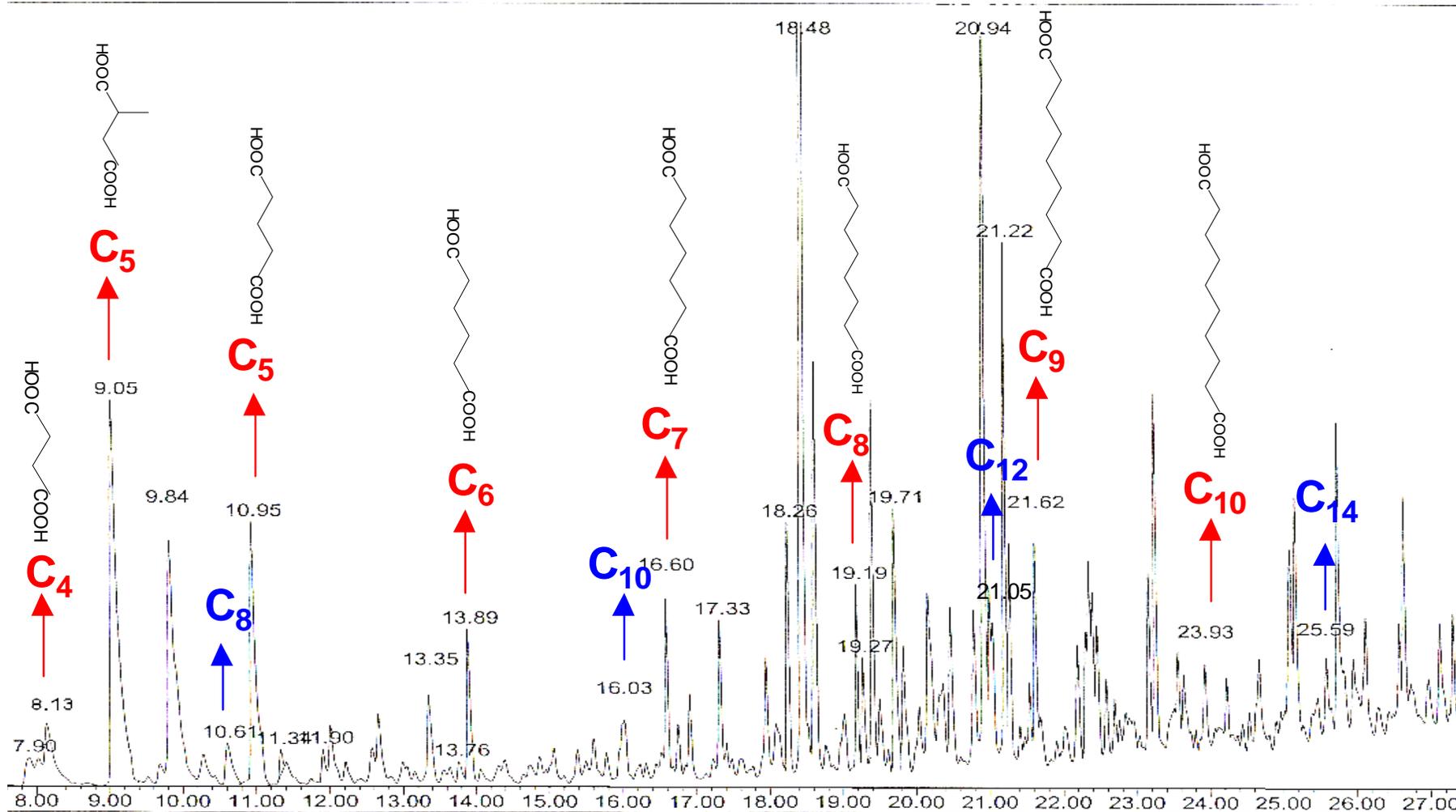
# TMO methylation - SPE

## Conclusions:

- Lengthy acid isolation step by N<sub>2</sub> drying or SPE is avoided
- Methylation efficiency and reproducibility high
- Final isolation of methyl esters using C18 / ethyl acetate



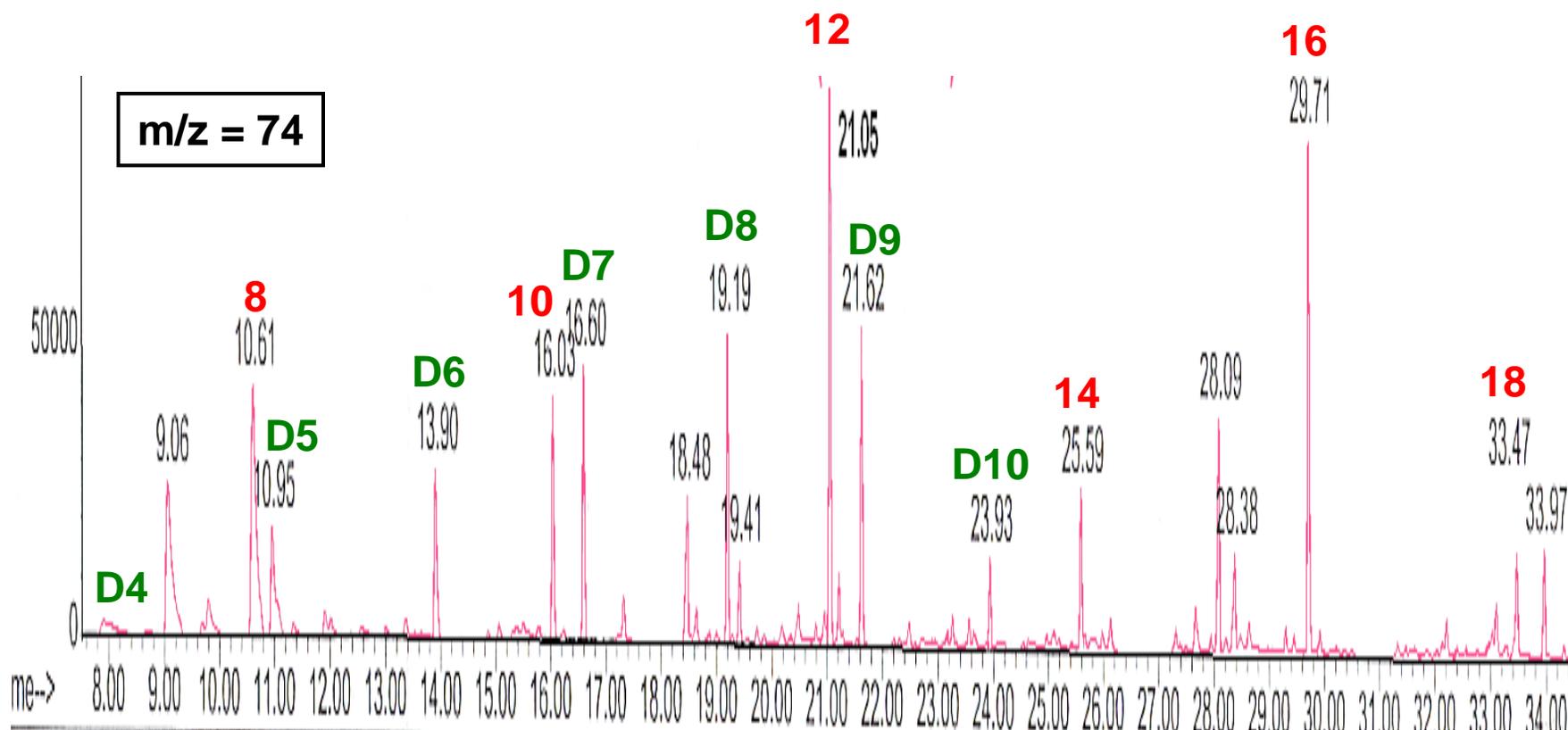
# Carboxylic Acids in MTE water by GC-MS



→ di-acids      → mono-acids



# Carboxylic Acids in MTE water by GC-MS



**XX – monocarboxylic acids**

**XX – dicarboxylic acids**



## Carboxylic Acids in MTE water by GC-MS

Aromatic acids		
Benzeneacetic acids	Benzoic acids	
benzeneacetic acid	benzoic acid	4-hydroxyl-3-methoxy-benzoic acid
4-methoxy-benzeneacetic acid	4-methyl-benzoic acid	?-hydroxyl-?-methoxy-benzoic acid
3,4-dimethoxy-benzeneacetic acid	4-methoxy benzoic acid	4-hydroxy-2-methoxy-3,5,6-trimethyl benzoic acid
4-hydroxy-3-methoxy-benzenacetic acid	3-methoxy-4-methyl-benzoic acid	2,4-dihydroxy-3,6-dimethyl-benzoic acid
Benzenedicarboxylic acids	2,4-dimethoxy-6-methyl-benzoic acid	3,4,5-trihydroxy benzoic acid
4-methyl-1,2-benzenedicarboxylic acid	?,?-dimethoxy-?-methyl benzoic acid	
4-methyl-1,3-benzenedicarboxylic acid	3-ethoxy-benzoic acid	
?-methyl-?,?-benzenedicarboxylic acid	2-hydroxy benzoic acid	
benzenetricarboxylic acids		
1,2,4-benzenetricarboxylic acid	1,3,5-benzenetricarboxylic acid	5-methyl-1,2,4-benzenetricarboxylic acid



# MTE Water Quality

## Organics Composition

	Loy Yang A			Morwell		
	150° 25 MPa	200° 6 MPa	200°C 25 MPa	200° 6 MPa	200° 6 MPa	200° 25 MPa
Total phenols (mg/kg, db)	0.34	3.8	14	21	25	71
Total acids (mg/kg, db)	161	620	980	1210	1280	1970
Total compounds identified by GC-MS (mg/kg, db)	161	625	1000	1300	1310	2040
Total organic carbon (mg C/kg, db)	710	1300	2200	2500	2900	3600

Detectable organics are mostly small molecular weight carboxylic acids, not phenols as observed for HTD and SD

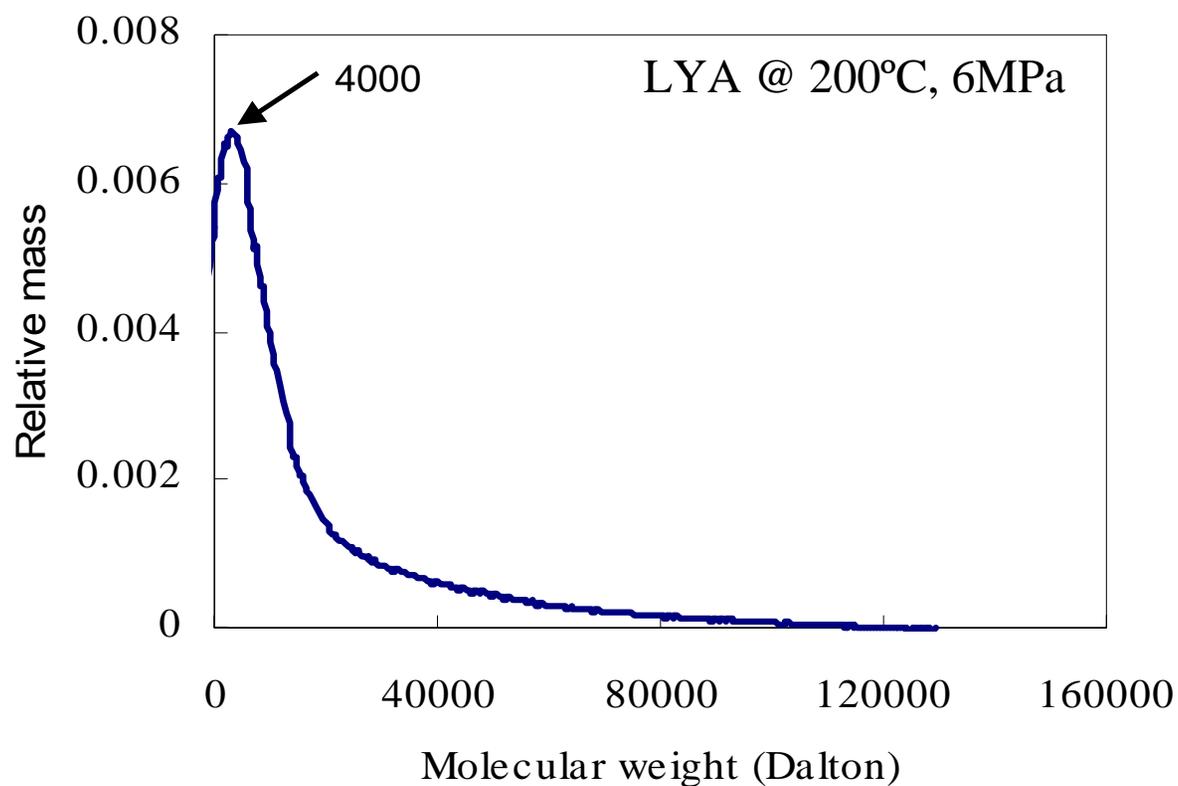
# MTE Water Quality

## Organics % observed by GC-MS

	Loy Yang A			Morwell		
	150° 25 MPa	200° 6 MPa	200°C 25 MPa	200° 6 MPa	200° 6 MPa	200° 25 MPa
Total phenols (as carbon) in OC (%)	.037	.023	.48	.62	.65	1.4
Total acids (as carbon) in OC (%)	12	24	24	27	23	28
Total identified organics (as carbon) in OC (%)	12	24	24	27	24	29

GC-MS detectable components account for 25-30% of the organics in MTE water

# Higher Molecular Weight Organics in MTE Water



By Field Flow Fractionation



# Conclusions

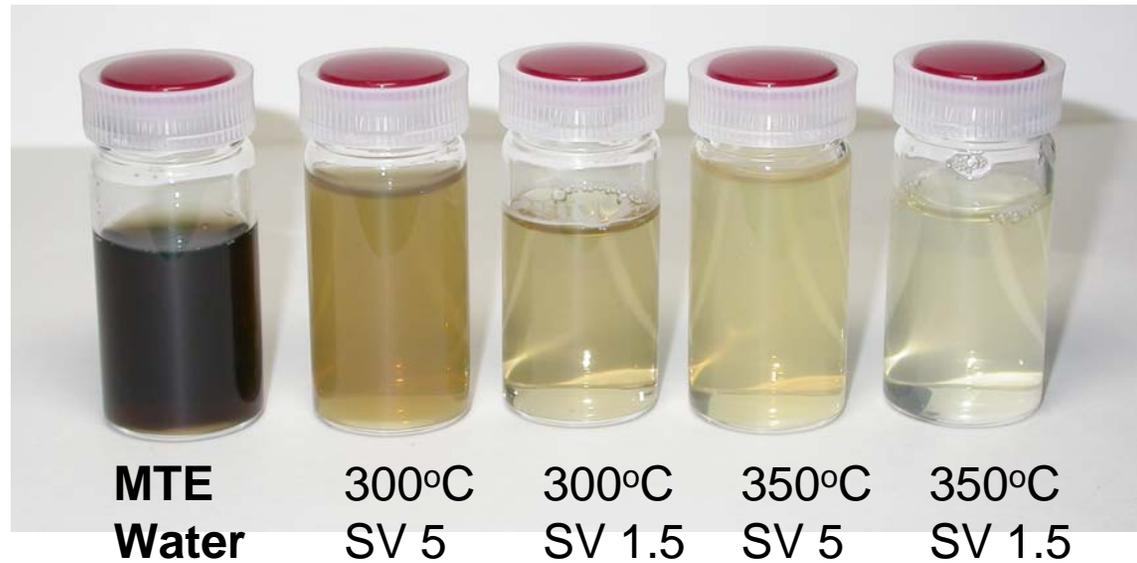
- MTE is effective for removing ~75% of the water in low rank coals like those from Victoria
- By-product water is 'clean' relative to that produced by other dewatering methods
- It will still require remediation for most foreseeable uses
- It contains inorganics as well as organics
- ~25-30% of the organics can be identified and quantified by GC-MS
- HMW components are also present
- Identifiable components are biomarkers and, considered as a whole, are not particularly nasty.



**“In effect, you are what you eat  
- plus a little bit of what you might inject”**

**Professor Colin Snape**

**BBC News**



# Quality Criteria

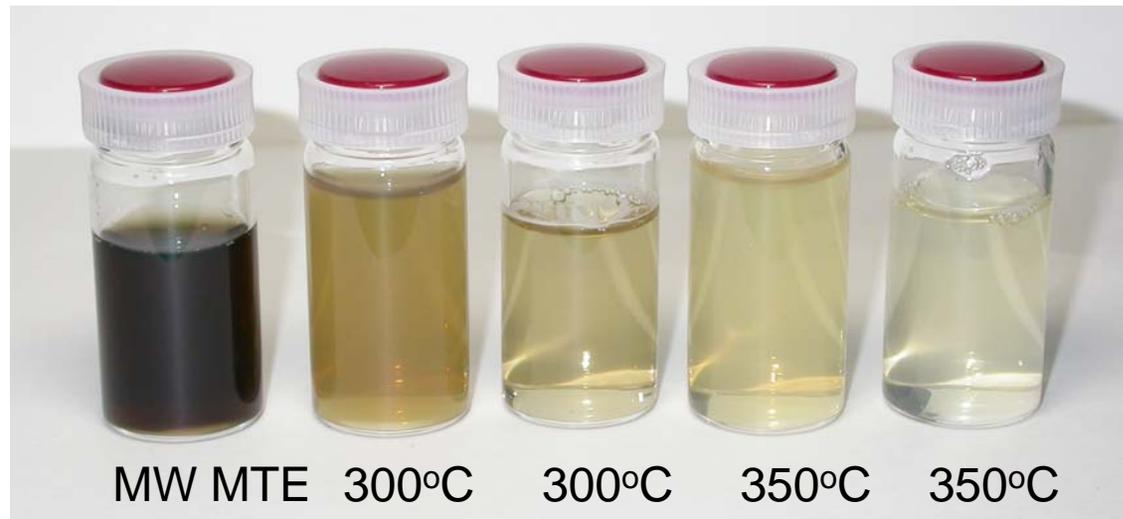
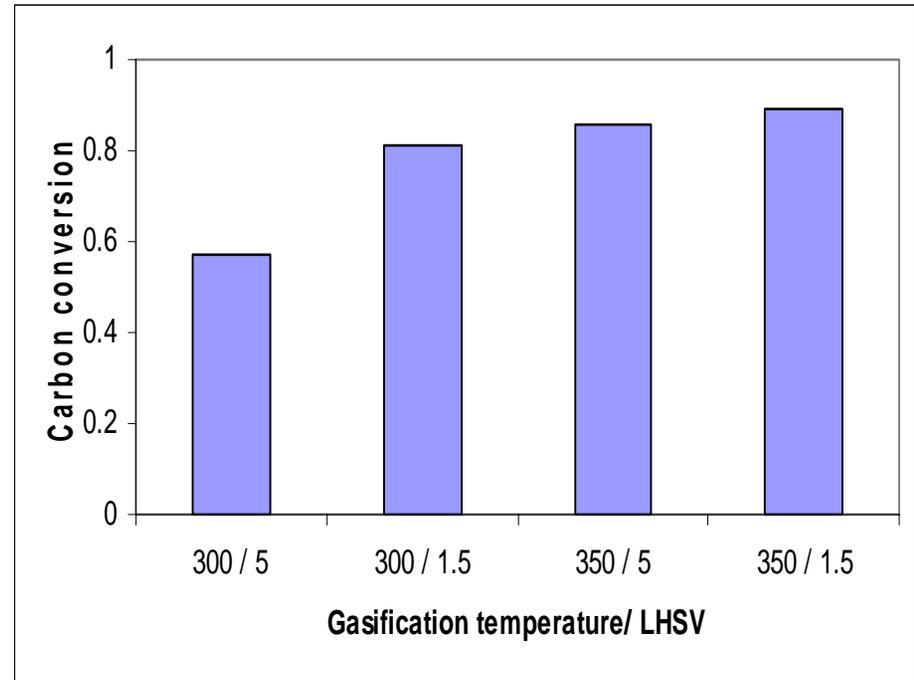
- Total Dissolved Solids (TDS): mg/L
- Suspended Solids (SS): mg/L
- pH
- Colour: Pt/co
- Turbidity: NTU<sup>2</sup>
- Conductivity: ( $\mu$ S/cm)
- Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD): mg/L



# MTE Water Remediation

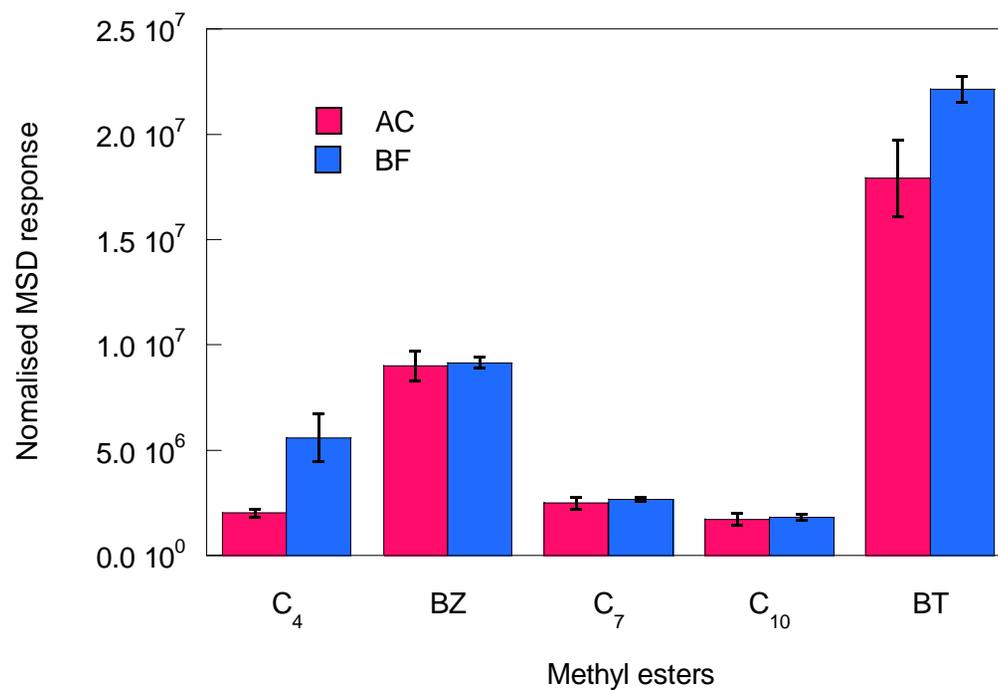
## 2. Gasification of Organics

Approach is moderately effective at 300-350C. This approach is ineffective for inorganics.



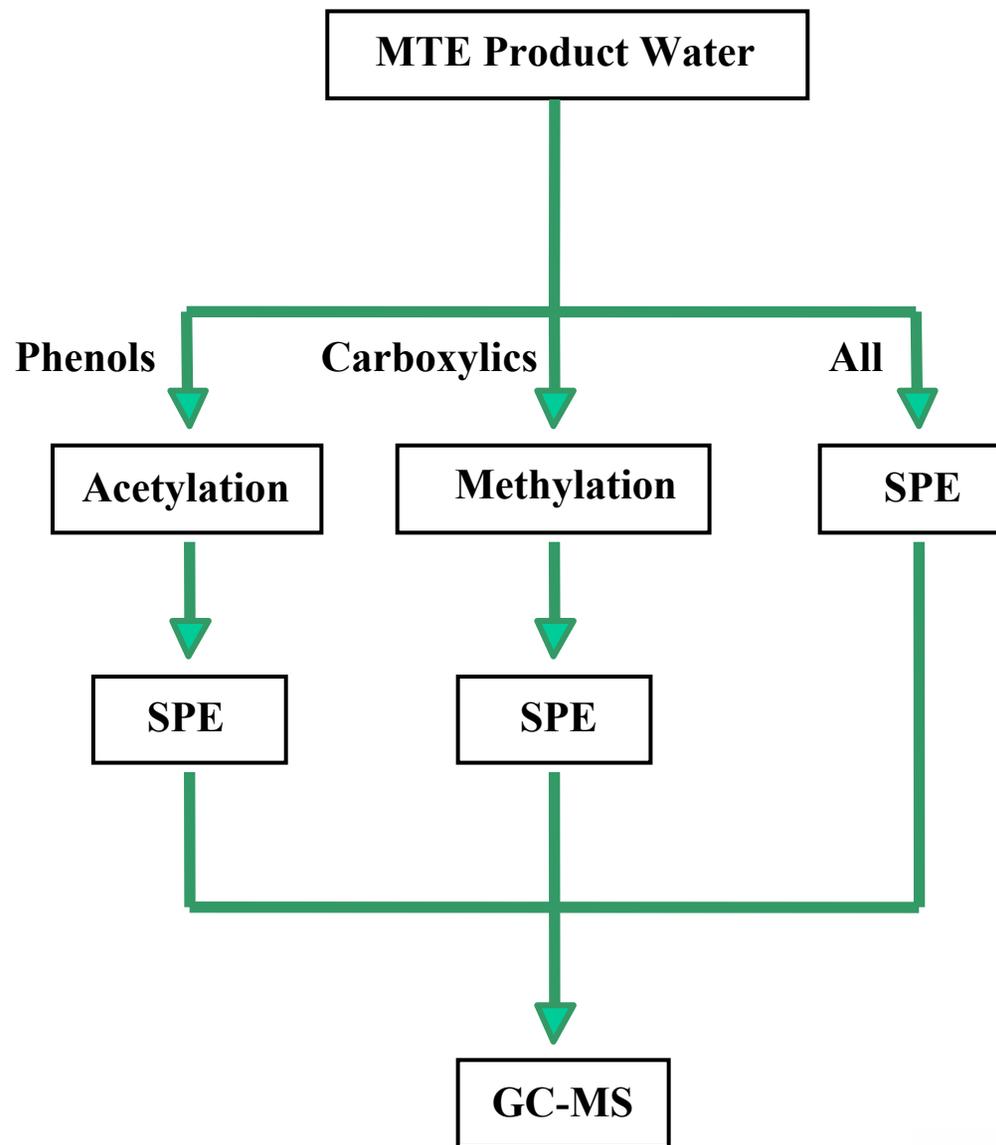
MW MTE 300°C 300°C 350°C 350°C  
Raw water SV 5 SV 1.5 SV 5 SV 1.5





**Figure 3-16. Comparison of acetyl chloride (AC) and  $BF_3$  (BF) for methylation of carboxylic acids**





## Mono-hydroxy phenols

Alkyl phenols		Methoxy phenols	Phenolic ketones
phenol	4-[1-methylethyl] phenol	2-methoxy phenol	1-[2-hydroxyphenyl]-ethanone
2-methyl phenol	2-methyl-5-[1-methylethyl]-phenol	4-methoxy phenol	1-[3-hydroxyphenyl]-ethanone
3-methylphenol	5-methyl-2-[1-methylethyl]-phenol	2-methoxy-4-methyl phenol	1-[4-hydroxyphenyl]-ethanone
4-methyl phenol	2,4-bis[1-methylethyl]-phenol	2-methoxy-4-ethyl phenol	1-[4-hydroxy-3,5-dimethoxyphenyl]-ethanone
2,4-dimethyl phenol	4-[1-methylpropyl] phenol	2,6-dimethoxy phenol	1-[4-hydroxy-3-methoxyphenyl]-2-propanone
2,5-dimethyl phenol	2- or 4-[2-methylpropyl] phenol	2,4-dimethoxy phenol	Phenolic benzaldehydes
2,3-dimethyl phenol	?-methyl?-propyl phenol	1-[4-hydroxy-3-methoxyphenyl] ethanone	2-hydroxy benzaldehyde
3-ethyl phenol	4-[1,1-dimethylpropyl] phenol		3-hydroxy-benzaldehyde
	4-[3-methyl-2-butenyl]-phenol		4-hydroxy benzaldehyde
			4-hydroxy-3-methyl benzaldehyde
			4-hydroxy-3-methoxy benzaldehyde (vanillin)
			4-hydroxy-3,5-dimethoxy-benzaldehyde

<b>Di-hydroxy phenols</b>			
<b>1,2-benzenediol (catechol)</b>	<b>?-dimethyl-1,3- benzenediol</b>	<b>1-[2,4-dihydroxyphenyl]- ethanone</b>	<b>1-[2,4-dihydroxy-3- methylphenyl]- propanone</b>
<b>1,3-benzenediol</b>	<b>2,3,5-trimethyl-1,4- benzenediol</b>	<b>1-[2,5-dihydroxyphenyl]- ethanone</b>	<b>2,4-dihydroxy benzaldehyde</b>
<b>1,4-benzenediol</b>	<b>a methoxy benzenediol</b>	<b>1-[2,4-dihydroxyphenyl]- propanone</b>	<b>2,5-dihydroxy benzaldehyde</b>
<b>2-methyl-1,4- benzenediol</b>		<b>1-[2,5-dihydroxyphenyl]- propanone</b>	<b>3,4-dihydroxy benzaldehyde</b>
<b>a methyl benzenediol</b>			<b>?,?-dihydroxy-4- methoxy-benzaldehyde</b>
<b>Tri-hydroxy phenols</b>			
<b>1,2,3-benzenetriol (pyrogallol)</b>	<b>1,2,4-benzenetriol</b>	<b>1,3,5-benzenetriol</b>	<b>a tri-hydroxy phenol (MW=182)</b>

